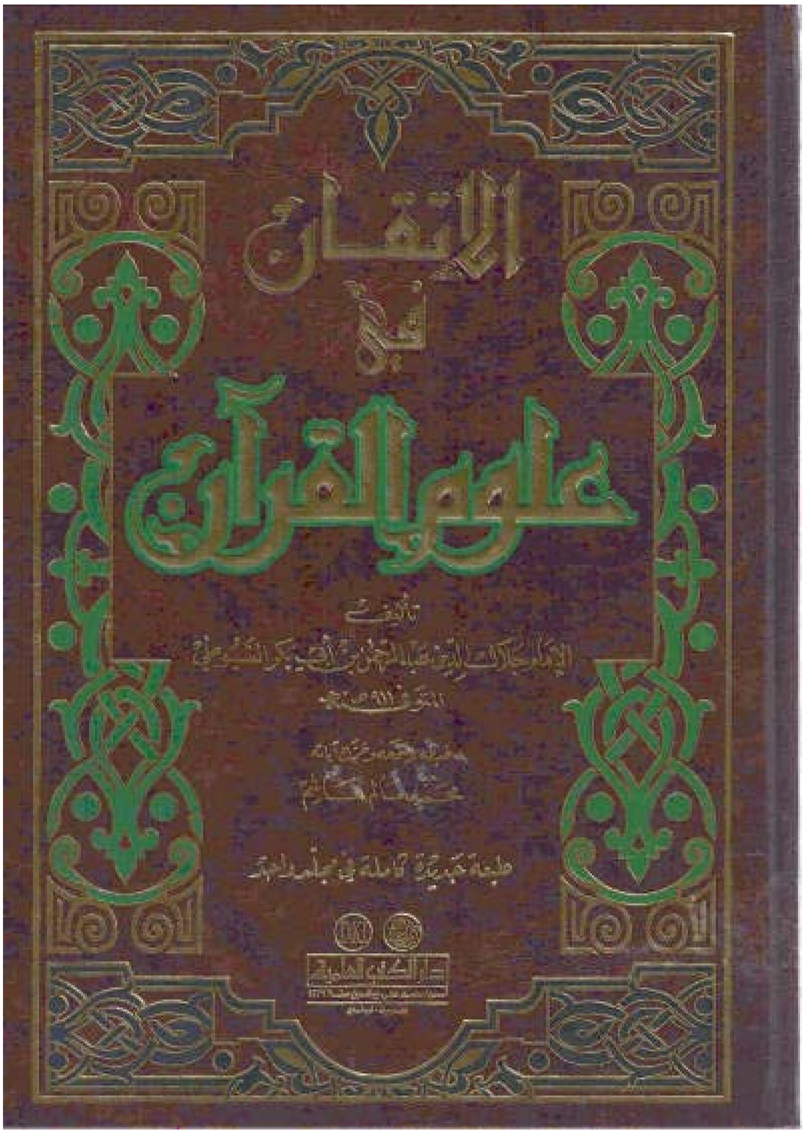
Al-Itqan fi Ulum al-Qur’an
الاتقان في علوم القران


الإتقان
في
علوم القرآن
تأليف
الإمام جلال الدين عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر السيوطي

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Draft

INTRODUCTION

The work before you, some twenty chapters of excerpts from Jalal ‘l-Din ‘l-Suyuti’s *‘l-Itqan fi `Ulum al-Qur'an*, is a translation of what this celebrated polymath considered indispensable linguistic and stylistic tools for comprehending the meanings of the Koran. Whilst the translation itself is to my knowledge unprecedented, the use of Itqan material as such in modern studies of the Koran is not, the most significant being that of Theodore Noldeke’s still invaluable, *Geschichte des Qoran.*[1] And whilst the Itqan is rightly described both as an invaluable “introduction to the critical study of the Koran”[2], as well as “a monumental synthesis of the quranic sciences”[3] its greater value would seem to lie in the as yet fledgling area of higher critical studies of the Koran. Arkoun might well have had just this in mind when he complained of an “epistemological myopia” common to both western as well as Islamic scholars who hesitate in applying modern linguistic tools such as narrative analysis or semiology to the Koran.[4] To this category, I would suggest, belong those traditionalists, for whom Koranic studies ventures not beyond the search for even greater literary clarity and thematic coherence in the Koran; this includes those Arabists, who—when not involved in some translation—perpetuate their convention of trying to isolate and define Islamic society, or the Arab mind, or the oriental temperament; and of late, it has come to include revisionists, who, having cast grave doubts on the authenticity of the traditional texts and even on the canonization of the Koran itself then turn around and selectively use those very texts to make their point!

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[1] Theodor Noldeke *Geschichte des Qorans* (Hildesheim, 1961) 3 vols. This is particularly true of the second half of the first volume which rearranges the chapters chronologically, the second volume in its entirety, which examines the historicity of the collected material itself , and much of the third volume, which examines its variant readings, its paleography, and its aesthetics.

[2] Nicholson, Reynold, *A Literary History of the Arabs* New Delhi 2004. p.45

[3] McAuliffe, Jane Dammen p.6 Some have outlined both its strengths as well as its weaknesses: Arthur Jeffrey, Materials for the History of the Text of the Koran in *The Koran: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies* ed. Colin Turner New York 2004.s’ .156for instance, writing on the textual history of the Koran calls the *Itqan* a “great compendium of Muslim Koranic Sciences” but one that nonetheless, contains little information on textual history. Jeffrey, Arthur Materials for the History of the Text of the Koran in *The Koran: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies* ed. Colin Turner New York 2004. .156

[4] Mohammed Arkoun *Lecture du Coran (L’Islam d’hier et d’aujourd’hui)* xxxiii, 175 pp. Paris, 1982. Also see, *Pour une critique de la raison islamique,* Paris, 1984

Inasmuch as western studies of the Koran differ in their approach to traditional source materials, and in the methodologies they each bring to bear on the study of such materials, they nonetheless share one feature which sets them apart from traditional approaches: they all ask questions which go beyond the Koran itself to the very *Sitz im Leben* of the faith itself. So, in seeking answers to questions about the origins of the sacred text, for instance, they implicitly ask not just when canonization occurred, or how outside religious strains are entwined in the Koranic narrative, but also which milieu most influenced its overall message. Muslim scholars accept as their working principle the Koran's ontological claims whereas non Muslims reject the claim itself as being outside the purview of academic inquiry. For secular academics this poses a dilemma because their only bridge to Islam's past is through material collected by early Muslim scholars who made no distinction between material that was purely historical and that which was salvific. The historiographical material of traditional Muslim scholarship has served as source material for both the standard Muslim narrative as well as the bulk of secular western studies on Islam and Muslims but with differences in approach. For traditional Islamic research, in their details the six authentic works on apostolic traditions (the *sihah sitta*) are authentic and more than adequate; for what they lack in historiographical rigor is more than provided by the comparatively less authentic historical works of Ibn Ishaq (d. 767 c.e.) and Tabari. As for western historians, for whom such material was largely evidentiary, what the texts said about the milieu in which early Islam developed was more important than the scrutiny to which their transmission was put. More important to them, therefore, were questions that asked, to what extent did Muhammad borrow Judeo-Christian leitmotifs, biblical personalities and mosaic rites and rituals? The only time alternate sources to Tabari et.al. were given serious consideration was when they differed substantively from the Biblical sources.[5]

In the 19th century Abraham Geiger[6] and Julius Wellhausen[7] tried to show that much of the Koran was actually borrowed, in the case of Geiger from rabbinic literature and in the case of Wellhausen, from Christian. This search for Islam's origins in biblical literature was continued in the 20th century by Charles Torrey and Richard Bell. Montgomery Watt was one of the first to break from this tradition with his focus on the sociological and ideological backdrop of 7th century Arabia as the impetus for Muhammad's teachings.[8] It was Watt who first suggested that the very demand for luxury goods in areas north and south of Mecca that so enriched its economy also plunged its citizens into a spiritual and moral crisis that helped launch Mohammed's monotheistic assault on idol worship.[9] But Watt came in for much criticism by Patricia Crone, following John Wansbrough, for hewing too closely to the traditional sources if not to their narrative, and for trying "to say nothing that would be the rejection of any of the fundamental doctrines of Islam".[10] Ever since the publication of Wansbrough's four articles that together comprise his *Quranic Studies* a small but not insignificant cadre of scholars have tried to develop alternate theories to the origins of Islam. For such scholars the origins of Islam, the canonization of its holy book, and the authentication of its apostolic traditions lie somewhere between the 7th and the 9th centuries of the common era.

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[5] So for example, Richard Bell in his *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment* London 1926, argues, without evidence, I might add, that the sources of the Koran, and by extension, those of Islam, were the many Christians who lived in Mecca. C.C. Torrey in his *The Jewish Foundations of Islam* New York 1933, argues in similar vein—and with even less evidence—that the Koran's antecedents lie in Judaism, not Christianity. Both Montgomery Watt in *Muhammad in Mecca,* Oxford 1953, as well as Bell in his *The Origins of Islam* concede however, that no substantial Jewish or Christian population dwelled in Mecca during the formative period of Islam.

[6] *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgennomen* (Bonn, 1833)was translated by F. Young as *Judaism and Islam* (1896) was actually part of Geiger's bigger project, that of showing Judaism's influence on both Christianity and Islam

[7] *Reste Arabischen Heidentums* (Berlin, 1887). For almost two decades Wellhausen preoccupied himself with reconstructing early Islamic history. In addition to a translation of al-Waqidi's *Maghazi*, he also wrote works on early Arabic poetry, Arab paganism and the early political conflicts in Islam.

[8] Watt in *Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman,* Oxford 1961, p. 192, explains his approach in the following way: "Though I have held that material factors created the situation in which Islam was born, I have also maintained that the social malaise they produce does not become a social movement until it has ideas to focus it."

[9] See, in this regard, Watt's entry, "Makka," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, VI, pp. 145-6. Patricia Crone however, failed to find evidence of trade in the luxury goods that Watt speaks of. John Jandora takes issue with the methodology of both Watt and Crone. The economic growth did take place, he suggests. During the period 572 c.e. to 616 war engulfed Mecca's neighbors to the north and their demand for leather and other animal by products turned Mecca into a conduit through which products passed from Africa to the fertile crescent.

To summarize, the most significant bone of contention in all of the foregoing approaches, therefore, is the historiographical. For traditional Muslim scholarship, only the factual minutiae of the traditional accounts are open to question; for most western scholars, the problem lies in traditional historical literature not being distinguishable from salvation literature; and for the radical revisionists such as Wansbrough, Crone, et.al., there is, in addition to the questionable authenticity of the historical logia, the greater problem pertaining to the very methods, theories, and principles used by modern historians. But in all such efforts the material found in the Itqan, if its almost ubiquitous appearance in so many texts is anything to go by, has proven both reliable and indispensable to the study of the Koran. All serious efforts at either plumbing the traditional depths of Muslim scholarship even deeper, or those given to probing alternate explanations further, have shown need for the material that Suyuti painstakingly put together. When complete, therefore, the translated Itqan will undoubtedly allow a far broader cross section of modern scholarship to engage the source material in this very important debate directly and accurately.

As for the sections chosen here, they reiterate the somewhat neglected fact that whilst theological reservations may have prevented comment on God's "word" (*kalam Allah)* the text's many linguistic and stylistic oddities made substantial editing of the Koran inevitable, even for early Muslims. Some such oddities Bell and Watt have described thus:

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[10] Montgomery Watt *Muhammad in Mecca* Oxford 1953. p. x. For Patricia Crones critique of the 'trade' argument to explain the genesis of Islam see: *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* Princeton, 1988.

> "abrupt changes of rhyme; repetition of the same rhyme word or rhyme phrase in adjoining verses; the intrusion of an extraneous subject into a passage otherwise homogenous; a differing treatment of the same subject in neighboring verses, often with repetition of words and phrases; breaks in grammatical construction which raise difficulties in exegesis; abrupt changes in length of verse; sudden changes of the dramatic situation, with changes of pronoun from singular to plural, from second to third, and so on; the juxtaposition of apparently contrary statements; the juxtaposition of passages of different dates. . . "[11]

To this, one may add: a lack of sequence or chronology in the arrangement of the chapters; a lack of uniformity of the chapters in order or content; virtual duplications of entire passages with minor lexical changes; a lack of coherence and uniformity of its legal precepts, and a literary style that is preponderantly allusive and referential rather than expository. But whilst such lexical lacunae, such stylistic oddities may well have disturbed Arthur Jeffrey's "sense of coherence' [12] , or provided incontrovertible need for revision of its contents for Watt, and Bell, for the early exegetes all of this was unmistakable evidence of that very inimitability which so exemplified its divine origins.[13] But these exegetes, their theological persuasions notwithstanding, still faced the onerous task of streamlining such oddities as to make the Koran's performative and juridical injunctions practicable to a community, which to quote Arkoun, was required "to consume the Qur'an in their daily lives"[14]

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[11] A. Jeffery *Materials for the History of the Text of the Quran* (Leiden, 1937) p. 1.

[12] A. Rippin "Reading the Qur'an with Richard Bell" *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 112, no. 4 (1992) p.646. R. Bell and W.M. Watt *Introduction to the Qur'an* (Edinburgh, 1970) It must be said that this charge of linguistic incoherence is not new: 'l-Kindi writing in the 9th century, called the history therein, jumbled and incomprehensible. This he too, argued was evidence that the Koran is the product of not one, divine source, but of many human minds.

[13] Not everyone saw this as peculiar to the Koran however. G.E. von Grunebaum for example, argued in "The Spirit of Islam as seen in its Literature" *studia Islamica* no.1, 1953, p.102, that Arabic literature, in general, pays more attention "to the individual verse, paragraph, at the expense of the consistent lay-out of the whole." The Arab literati, he goes on to say. "demonstrated that the value of a poem to them would depend on the perfection of its individual lines."

[14] M. Arkoun p.41

To do so however, they had to do the following: one, to start viewing the sacred text as literary text rather than as liturgy; two, to seamlessly append their human deliberations side by side with the divine text so as to make the former as dogmatically acceptable, almost, as the latter; and three, to subtly extend the sanctity ascribed to the Koran itself, to these quite human interpretations. The solution which evolved gradually to become a veritable ‘science of interpretation’ or *`ilm ‘l-tafsir* was rather unique in that it called, not for a recalibrated text following theme or chronology, as such, but for the composition of a set of hermeneutical tools which, together would remain clearly subordinate to the letter of the text, whilst becoming at the same time indispensable to its practical application. The tools of tafsir helped the exegete undertake the very thematic rearrangements, chronological sequencing, and stylistic editing that modern scholarship has so strongly advocated and which Muslim scholarship has equally strongly resisted. An excellent example in this regard is 2:158: “Behold, (the hills in Mecca) ‘l-Safa and ‘l-Marwa are of the symbols of God; and thus, one who performs the hajj of the House or the `umrah would do no wrong in circling them”. Like many other verses in the Koran that feature prominently in ritual or dogma this one is terse to the point of inscrutability. For instance, those outside Mecca would find it impossible to determine the objects to which the names referred, whether such circling is obligatory or optional, and of course the point of the matter itself! In other words, the lack of context and subtext to this verse made it a prime candidate for textual emendation; and yet no early exegete whether affiliated to the Sunni, the Shiite or any other sect even suggested that the text itself be emended to better present its purport. Instead of tampering with the text proper exegetes worked around it, imputing juridical glosses to the first part of the verse only, deeming it the cause célèbre of the walking between the two hills ritual of the hajj; and to the second they imputed a historical gloss, claiming that it explained how an overtly pagan ritual was incorporated into the hajj ritual. James Bellamy, in his article suggesting emendations to what he considers textual errors in the Koran, cites various examples of early Muslim scholarship conceding his kind of errors but ruling out categorically emendations to the sacred text. We have for example, the case of `Ali, the fourth caliph, refusing to change the word *talh* (bananas) in 56:29 for *tal`* (blossoms) even though he believed a scribal error had occurred. [15] Other prominent scholars of the first Islamic generation made similar comments about scribal errors in the text but all steered clear of emendations. This in my opinion, was because the text by then had indeed, already been canonized, and this text based on the `Uthmanic codex came to be accepted as the inerrant word of God. [16]

This early transformation of sacred scripture to canon had the consequence of not just putting the sacred text beyond question but also beyond reach; henceforth, guidance would have to be sought in local practices or the ever burgeoning apostolic traditions. The absence of the Koran from the legislative process of the early legists and theologians was underscored by both Schacht and Wensinck, in their respective studies of the early development of Islamic law and Muslim Creed. And this was the evidence that Wansbrough cited, amongst others, to support his own theory of canonization occurring over "more than a single generation".[17] I would suggest, however, that contra Wansbrough, it was not the absence of a canonized text that explains the lack of reference to the Koran in early Muslim thinking but rather its canonized presence in the way described by Watt and Bell, that all but precluded reference to its verses in law and theology.

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[15] James Bellamy: "Some Proposed Emendations to the Text of the Qur'an" in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* vol.113, no.4, (Oct. 1993) Pp.562-563. Also see Ignaz Goldziher: *Die Richtungen der islamische Koranauslegung* Leiden, 1952.

[16] According to Muslim tradition canonization occurred when Gabriel who for twenty three served as the angel of revelation made one final review which then established the present text as the ipsissima verba of God. For more on the process of revelation becoming canon see: Suyuti, *al-Itqan* I, 164-83.

[17] John Wansbrough *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* New York, 2004.P.44. For Schacht's views on the development of Islamic Law see: Josef Schacht: *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* Oxford, 1950. For the development of the Islamic creed, see: Jan Wensinck *The Muslim Creed, Its Genesis and Historical Development* New York 1965

Assuming the aforementioned is more accurate an explanation for the absence of scripture from early legal discourse, the traditional account of how scriptural logia transformed into standardized codex, thence to canonized text, and thence to the explicative process known as tafsir could be said to at least follow the broad strokes of the traditional narrative.[18] This may well explain why modern scholarship still clings to the Koran being revealed to Muhammad over a period of twenty three years until his death in 632 ce.; of Abu Bakr his successor, commissioning the first authorized written copy thereof; of this copy being vouchsafed to his successor, `Umar, and then to his daughter, Hafsa; and finally, of `Uthman, the third caliph, authorizing the Hafsa codex to be copied and widely distributed as the only official version of the Koran.

To pursue the traditional account, the period that followed has been described as one in which all authority was being contested, with intellectual giants like Ja`far al-Sadiq, the Shiite imam, claiming sole authority not just over Muslim society, but also over the interpretation of the holy writ—and in particular, its allegorical verses. Because no explicit texts legitimized Shiite claims to leadership Ja`far was forced to rely heavily on the interpretive latitude the allegorical verses offered to make just such claims. Thus: the signs of God refer to the imams; the Straight Path is that which the Imams followed; and the Light of God refers ‘not just to the imams but also their quasi-divine character”.[19] Sunnis meanwhile, with de facto political authority, had little need for allegorical interpretations; instead, they looked to the Koran to hold on to power gained militarily, and to use the authority of the sacred text to consolidate such ill gained authority or to regulate civil society in ways that privileged their respective constituencies over those of their opponents. In the case of Sunni scholars therefore, the point of entry into exegesis was language, not allegory, but interestingly enough, even there, those scholars who initially did no more than clarify the obscurities of the sacred text ultimately graduated to become its de facto gatekeepers; so, as in some other religions, so too in Sunni Islam, philology and linguistics not only privileged the clergy over the laity, but also helped circumvent theological divides that otherwise separated the inerrant divine word from fallible exegetical opinion.[20]

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[18] Wansbrough, not unexpectedly, disagrees, arguing instead that “Quranic exegesis. . .is not likely to have been articulated before the third/ninth century. See his “Majaz al-Qur’an: Periphrastic Exegesis” in *Bulletin of the School of African and Oriental Studies* No.2, 1970, p.247

To avoid the pitfalls of literalism Sunni hermeneutics developed into a complex system of caveats, that required, for instance, that texts be interpreted in light of varying contexts (*maqam),* and that laws derived as such, include not just one, but all verses pertaining to any given topic. (*'l-Qur`an yafissuru ba`duhu ba`dan*).[21] The need for context is succinctly explained by 'l-Khatib 'l-Qazwini, the celebrated linguist, as follows:

> That context which demands the definite, the generalization, or the advancement of parts of a discourse, or the inclusion (of particular words) differs from that context which demands the indefinite specification, the postponement or the omission. Also, the context of separation differs from that of joining; the situation that requires brevity differs from that which requires prolixity. And discourse with an intelligent person differs from discourse with an obtuse one.[22]

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[19] Bruce Lawrence *The Qur'an: A Biography* New York, 2006 p. 81.

[20] Valentin Voloshinov *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge, 1986). The standard work for the textual history of the Koran remains Theodor Noldeke and Freidrich Schwally Geschichte des Qorans (Hildesheim, 1961) For an overview of the genesis of philological exegesis see Claude Gilliot "The Beginnings of Qur'anic Exegesis" in Andrew Rippin ed. *The Qur'an: Formative interpretation* (ALdershot, 1999) pp.1-27. The precursor to the formal exegesis of the Koran was the development of the Arabic language, its stylistics and its lexicography. In this regard see: Johannn Fuck *Arabiya: Untersuchungen zur arabischen Sprach-und Stilgeschichte.* (Berlin: 1950) On the development of Arabic orthography see: Khalil Semaan *Linguistics in the Middle Ages: Phonetic Studies in Early Islam* (Ledien, 1968)

[21] See M. A.S. Abdel Haleem "Contextg and Internal Relationships: Keys to Quranic Exegesis. A Study of Surat 'l-Rahman (QUran chapter 55)" in *Approaches to the Qur'an* G.R. Hawting and Abdul-KAder Shareef eds. (London, 1993) pp. 71-99

[22] Muhammad b. Abd 'l-Rahman 'l-Qazwini *Sharh 'l-Talkhis* (Damascus, 1970) p. 14

This was followed by the publication of works such as those of al-Jurjani (d. 474) which Aziz ‘l-Azmeh, describes as "one of the most sustained, refined, rigorous and durable attempts to construct a theory of the production of meaning in discourse analysis in any language and at any time.”[23] Jurjani’s was an incredibly complex understanding of rhetoric, eloquence, and tropes, which says Edward Said. “seem startlingly modern but which in fact are deeply rooted in the Koran.”[24] These hermeneutical tools developed slowly mainly because of the general aversion in early Islam to commentaries on the Koran.[25] But the spread of the faith to the more sophisticated north and its entanglement with older and more complex religious systems such as Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism put enormous pressure on the relatively straightforward dogma of the Arabian peninsula to nuance its theological underpinnings. Add to that the shifting demographics within Islam itself, the addition of converts from the aforementioned religions, and the infusion of their disparate social customs into Arab social practice and the demand for scriptural recalibration becomes unavoidable. Later, ‘l-Shatibi would further refine this rule by stressing the need to know, not just physical contexts, or social conditions, but also what he termed special conditions because, as he put it, “the same statement can be understood in different ways in relation to two different addressees or more.”[26] And it was none other than the celebrated polemicist Ibn Taymiyah himself, who reemphasized the rule to consider all verses for legislative purposes for: “what is given briefly in one place is expanded in another.”[27] Taken together, the exegetical devices and the accompanying rules that Jurjani and others compiled did the following: set limits on the probative value of the literal text itself, gave sacerdotal authority to exegetical interpretations, but also established an abiding distinction between the infallible divine text, and its fallible, human interpretations—the former may not be touched or retouched through textual redaction whereas the latter is the only determinant of sacred meaning.

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[23] Aziz ‘l-`Azmeh *Arabic Thought and Islamic Societies* (London, 1986) p. 120. And Margaret Larkin in *The Theology of Meaning: `Abd ‘l-Qahir ‘l-Jurjani’s Theory of Discourse* (New Haven, 1995) clearly shows how the doctrine of inimitability influenced the linguistic and rhetorical elements of the Arabic language.

[24] E. W. Said: “Living in Arabic” *Raritan* 21 no.4 pp. 220-36 Spring 2002

[25] For a history and analysis of the exegetical devices see: Herbert Berg *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (London, 2000)

[26] Abu Ishaq ‘l-Shatibi, *‘l-Muwafaqat fi Ususl ‘l-Ahkam* (Cairo, 141h) p.202

[27] Ahmed, Ibn Taymiyah *muqaddimat fi Usul ‘l-Tafsir* (Kuwait, 1971) p. 93.

For a millennium almost, hermeneutical tools randomly increased in size and sophistication, kept in tight tandem between the need to expand the immanence of the text to cover the vagaries of human life but without compromising its ontological status. and to maintain its driven primarily by the governed the interpretive process, unchallenged. This delicately crafted balance between religious authority and Sacred text changed after colonialism however, when `ulama authority was challenged by new power brokers, the military, the ruling western educated elite, and the Islamic Movement, among them. All three, in particular, saw need for a new approach to the text, with the military and the ruling elite hoping thereby, to create a secular civil society imbued with only so much Islam as to define collective identity, and the fundamentalists hoping, more optimistically, for an Islam with pervasive influence over both public policy and private opinion. The ruling elite, together with the military, wielded control over those societal institutions such as law and education which critics charged had also been thoroughly colonized, and in whose reaction in fact the genesis of movements such as the Jamate Islami in South Asia and the ‘l-Ikhwan ‘l-Muslimun in Egypt may be traced. But whilst liberals and secularists controlled government, education and the judiciary of the new nation states, the individual Muslim in his private capacity turned once again to the `ulama and the mystics for moral and spiritual guidance. The latter may well have lost the pecuniary largess they so enjoyed under the caliphs and sultans of imperial Islam, but thanks to the colonial experience, they gained instead, a newfound credibility for opposing colonialism in places, or for blocking what Richard Bulliet calls the "emerging tyranny"[28] of those in power hell bent on "eviscerating the oppositional potential represented by the sharia and the `ulama."[29] And the great irony of that moment in Koranic hermeneutics is the fact that of the two competing factions it was the ruling elite and the Islamic Movement rather than the tradtitional `ulama who turned exclusively to the Koran for validation. And with good reason: to seek validation in any other sphere of Islamic law would require a certain deference to the very `ulama. whose public prestige is what impeded total elitist control of Muslim society in the first place! Outright rejection of the `ulama and of their legal authority as was done in Turkey, however, would certainly have earned the ire of even those otherwise not indisposed to such changes. [30] Instead, a process of scriptural attenuation was adopted in favor of the Koran and against the coded legal opinions, the *fatawa* , of the ‘ulama and more importantly, against apostolic traditions (*hadith*) the primary evidentiary source for traditional authority. Reliance on these sources was reduced gradually until only the Koran remained as the sole source of guidance to Muslim society. Surprisingly, help arrived from within, from Muhammad `Abduh in Egypt, for instance, and his acolytes elsewhere, who for quite different reasons more effectively undermined traditional authority (*taqlid*) by referring to it disparagingly as blind imitation, or irrational obeisance. The critics of *taqlid* said, for instance, that, "it is better to follow a beast than an imitator; and the opinion of the scholars and the devotees, because they are unsubstantiated and mimetic, are often contradictory."[31] Or worse still, that, "Imitating religious leaders who pretentiously offer their views as authentic true religion is tantamount to obeying tyrants; both are idolatrous."[32] The alternative to *taqlid* was *ijtihad* or individual interpretations based solely on selective reference to the Koran: the new elite's ijtihad was to arm itself with the Arabic text alone, or with an annotated translation of the original, and to use that against tradition, but ironically also against each other, to legitimize agendas that were clearly at odds with each other—some were liberal, others conservative, and others still, militant.[33] The principles of tafsir were dispensed with either because of their irrelevance or because of their conflict with modern agendas. In sum therefore, whilst the Koran has since the beginnings of Islam been considered no less than the very ipsissima verba of God its interpretation and application was anything but literal. To early exegetes already, it was patently clear that the word of God was in dire need of the mind of man to make comprehensible the Koran's disparate ideas. And yet this vital area of Koranic studies remains largely ignored in contemporary academic circles.

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[28] In *The Case for the Islamo-Christian Civilization* (New York, 2004) Bulliet argues that the `Ulama were pivotal in opposing tyranny. As examples, he brings attention to: the 1891-93 ulama led revolt known as the Iranian Tobacco Rebellion; Sharif Hussain's leadership of the Arab rebellion against Ottoman tyranny; The Mahdi's opposition to the Anglo-Egyptian control over the Sudan; and Shamil's resistance to Russian expansion in the Caucasus.

[29] Ibid., 73

[30] Some in fact, trace the beginnings of the end of `ulama scriptural authority to the Ottomanization of Islamic law. Whilst the codification of Islamic law in 1839 may well have been to redefine Ottoman identity, it at the same time took authority away from the `ulama and vested it in the state legislature. Roger Owen *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Middle East* 2nd edition, (London, 2000) has on the other hand, stressed the army's role in establishing social institutions and in pushing these newly independent states into the modern world.

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[31] `Abd 'l-Qadir 'l-Jaza'iri *Dhikra 'l-`Aqil wa tanbih 'l-Ghafil* (Beirut, 1966) p.34.

[32] Muhammad Na`ini *Tanbih 'l-Ummat wa Tanzih 'l-Millat Ya Hukumat az Nazr-e-Islam* (Tehran 1960)

[33] Khaled Abou el-Fadl in his *The Authoritative and the Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse: A Contemporary Case Study* (Austin 1997) brings attention to the legal power struggle this access to the text has now initiated. Whilst the thrust of his arguments is valid, it is weakened I believe by its narrow focus on fundamentalist abuse of the Koran only, whereas the actual problem is one of interpretive abuse, both liberal and fundamentalist. Textual reductionism is often undertaken by liberals such Asma Barlas in *Believing* Women *in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (Austin, Texas, University of Texas Press, 2001) who strive to preserve the status of the Koran. This however, is countered by critics of the Koran itself such as Neelam Hussain, 'Women as Objects and Women as Subjects within Fundamentalist Discourse.' In *Locating the Self: Perspectives on Women and Multiple identities* eds. Nighat Khan, Rubina Saigol and Afiya Zia. (Lahore: ASR, 1994) and Fatima Mernissi, *Women*'s *Rebellion and Islamic Memory* (London: Zed. 1996) who argue that it is indeed Islam's sacred document that privileges men over women, and thus entrenches patriarchy and the abuse of women on theological grounds. For creative re-readings of clearly patriarchal verses such as 2:228 which puts husbands one notch above wives, see Riffat Hassan, 'An Islamic Perspective.' In *Sexuality: A Reader* ed. Karen Lebacqz (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1999) and Amina Wadud. *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (Oxford: University Press, 1999). For an overview of the rights women in early Islam enjoyed and subsequently lost, see: Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of Modern Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992)

And this may well be because the study of the Koran is still driven by the trajectory if not the sentiment of early inter faith rivalries. To early Christians looking to curb the growth of Islam at Christianity's expense, the focus had to be on the Koran: given Muslim belief in its inerrancy, any subversion thereof, they believed, would at the very least, staunch Christian conversions to Islam.[34] Peter, the Abbott of Cluny, seems to have been driven by this very fervor when he commissioned Robertus Ketenensis, in 1143 c.e.. to translate the Koran into Latin[35]; the same spirit prompted Andre du Ryer's French translation of 1647, as well as Savary's better known translation which appeared later, in 1783.[36] Renewed interest in the Koran today stems, not from religious polemics but rather from civic proximity, from the fact that the sound of the Koran now resonates all the way from the Banlieue's of Paris to the apartment complexes of Buffalo, New York. For the millions of Muslims who now call Western Europe and the United States home their religion and culture has as much right to be in their adopted homelands as does any other; for their uneasy neighbors, on the other hand, that right is undermining the very principles of western civilization. And for historian Paul Johnson, the problem lies squarely with the Koran and its interpretation: Muslim animosity to Jews, he thinks, finds inspiration in the verse: "Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans" (5:85); and their propensity to violence, in another verse, 9:5: "Then fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them. And seize them, beleaguer them and lie in wait for them, in every strategem of war. . .until they embrace Islam." (9:5)[37] Nor can such strictures be glossed over through scriptural interpretation, he believes, because Islam, unlike other faiths, has not gone beyond scriptural literalism. "Unlike Christianity" he says, "which, since the Reformation and Counter Reformation, has continually updated itself and adapted to changed conditions, and unlike Judaism, which has experienced what is called the 18th-century Jewish enlightenment, Islam remains a religion of the Dark Ages. The 7th-century Koran is still taught as the immutable word of God, any teaching of which is literally true."[38]

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[34] Thus, the introductory volume to Maracci's Latin translation–upon which George Sale's English translation is based–is revealingly titled: *A Refutation of the Koran*.

[35] For more on this prodigious translators life and contributions see: Charles Burnett "A Group of Arabic Latin Translators Working in northern Spain in the Mid 12th Century" in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1977) pp.62-70; and Marie Therese d'Alverny, "Translators and Translations" in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* ed. Robert Benson and Giles Constable Cambridge, 1982. pp. 449.

[36] The Koran was not all that Peter commissioned: he had fragments of Muhammad's biography along with his teachings translated as well; together these formed what came to be known as the *Corpus Toletantum*. In time, Martin Luther himself had this collection sent to Basle, to be published and disseminated to those engaged in refuting Muslim belief and dogma. The "Basle Koran" as the translation came to be known, actually comprised of three separate sections: the first section was dedicated wholly to the *Corpus Toletantum*, the second, to refutations penned by Nicolas Cusanus, Ricoldo da Monte Croce, and others, and the third to the history of the Saracens and the

This charge of scriptural literalism against the Koran is widespread even though its origins lie not with Islam but with European Christianity. When Martin Luther made his *sola scriptura* (scripture alone) argument against the Pope's claims to infallibility, he presented biblical literalism as a substitute to both papal authority as well as church councils.[39] Whilst this temporarily empowered Protestants against papal authority and gave their religious dicta an equal sense of infallibility, in time it attenuated the church's historical role of interpreting scripture in accordance with changed circumstances. And later, in reaction to the scientific revolution, the doctrine of biblical inerrancy was first developed by Archibald Alexander,

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Turks. See, in this regard: J. Kritzeck, *Peter, the Venerable and Islam* (Princeton, 1964); H. Bobzin, *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation* (Stuttgart, 2005)

[37] Paul Johnson *Relentlessly and Thoroughly: The Only Way to Respond* in National Review Online October 15th 2001. The Reverend Franklin Graham also charges the Koran with inciting attacks on non-Muslims: "You can read it for yourself. And these verses from the Qur'an are not taken out of context, it's there. So we just don't want to admit [it], in this country. We would like that everything was in a bubble and everybody's nice and everybody's happy. I'm sorry, we don't live in that kind of world." See, *Franklin Graham on Islam* Religion and Ethics Weekly August 9th, 2002

[38] Ibid.

[39] Around the turn of the last century Hilton S. Terry, a Methodist Episcopalian writing in *Biblical Hermeneutics* 2nd edition (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, n.d.) P.205, turned this very idea into a hermeneutical precept thus: "A fundamental principle in grammatico-historical exposition is that the words and sentences can have but one significance in one and the same connection. The moment we neglect this principle we drift out upon a sea of uncertainty and conjecture."

Princeton's Theological Seminary's first president. Alexander's stated goal was to defend orthodox Calvinism "against, on the one hand, the more subjective and individualistic interpretations coming from the revivals of the Second Great Awakening and, on the other hand, the naturalistic assumptions of Deism."[40] In response to the former he privileged biblical authoritativeness over experience, and to the latter, the notion "that everything in the Bible was in accord with scientifically verifiable truth . . . The reader rightly led by the Spirit and the scientist rightly led by reason were bound to arrive at the same conclusions."[41] His successor, Charles Hodge argued further that one need not go beyond the literal word of the Bible, which alone embodies the truth; all readings of Scripture when done with sincerity necessarily yield the same meanings. This interpretive revolution, known variously as the doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy, the Single Meaning principle, or the Grammatical-Historical approach to hermeneutics, describes western Christianity's literalist approach to the Bible; as such, it has no parallel in Islam, or in any other religious tradition for that matter.[42]

For Islam, the impetus to develop a Koranic hermeneutic stemmed directly from the dogma that developed around the revelatory event itself. Whilst it is true that revelation as construed within an Islamic framework is more direct and more intense than is the case in the Judeo-Christian tradition, it is equally true that its culmination is also more abrupt and more definitive. In Islam, God delivered verbatim, His final message to Muhammad through the agency of the angel Gabriel; and thereafter, all revelation came to an abrupt halt. Henceforth, all glosses on the canonized corpus designed to remove lexical and syntactical opacities or to provide contextual recalibrations were precluded, as a matter of dogma, from being considered divine or inerrant; only the text of the Koran as determined by Muhammad prior to his death was considered revelation. For Jews, on the other hand, new revelations legitimately authenticated new situations, as was the case when, for instance, after the destruction of the second temple in 586 b.c.e. Jeremiah was solicited to provide fresh revelatory guidance; such solicitations are considered blasphemous in Islam, and playing Jeremiah, as some in Islamic history have discovered is a capital crime.[43]

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[40] Nancy T. Ammerman, "North American Protestant Fundamentalism" in *Fundamentalisms Observed* ed. Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby. (Chicago 1991) p.15

[41] Ibid., 15

And to the extent that scriptural literalism does exist in the interpretive process of the Koran today, this ironically is the preoccupation, almost, of the post colonial Muslim psyche that is on the one hand largely ignorant of Islam's hermeneutical heritage, and on the other, thoroughly schooled in the inerrancies of modern scientific thought; as such, it is more symptomatic of minds schooled in medicine and in engineering, let's say, than in the traditional Islamic sciences. The Muslim cleric is as perturbed by the carnage and mayhem of religiously inspired social disorder as is the average Muslim; but perhaps more ominous for him is the fact that its rationale is scripture whose exegesis until modern times was strictly his forte. Throughout history parts of the Koran for the average Muslim were within reach, and parts outside: within

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[42] Article VII, "Articles of Affirmation and Denial," adopted by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, November 10-13, 1982, reads: "We affirm that the meaning expressed in. each biblical text is single, definite and fixed. We deny that the recognition of this single meaning eliminates the variety of its application."

[43] The terms used to distinguish between apostolic and non apostolic revelation is *wahy* and *ilham*. Whilst the Koran uses the term wahy generically to refer to all forms of inspiration including God inspiring bees (16:68), and the devil inspiring humans (6:121), Muslim theology distinguished prophets from other human beings by designating rnon apostolic forms of inspiration as *ilham*. Arthur Jeffrey in "The Quran as Scripture" in *Muslim World* vol. 40 (1950) 190-2 suggests that the word *wahy* combines both a generic inspiration that is internal as well as the external yield of that inspiration. The former implied a poetic impulse in Muhammad, not unlike that experienced by the Arab poets, whereas the latter conjured notions of a separate scripture with material quite unlike that which the poetic impulse produced. On the conceptual framework of revelation, see: S. Wild *We Have sent down to thee the book with the truth. . .Spatial and temporal implications of the Quranic Concept of Nuzul, Tanzil, and Inzal* in *The Qur'an as Text* (Leiden: 1996) 137-53. The non apostolic term *ilham* appears once in 8: 91: *fa alhamaha fujuraha wa taqwaha* in reference to souls that are inspired towards immorality and virtue. Also see: F. Jadaane "Revelation et Inspiration en Islam" in *Studia Islamica* no.26 (1967), 23-47

reach were its aesthetics, both visual and auricular, as etched on the wall hangings of his surroundings, for instance, or as chanted for comfort or devotion during times of joy or sorrow. And out of reach was its interpretation when used as dogma, ritual or law; the latter was controlled by the religious hierarchy, the `ulama who themselves were controlled by the academic guilds to which they belonged.[44] As such, no individual other than a scholar could engage in socially disruptive hermeneutics; but no scholar could likewise, engage in such hermeneutics given his affiliation to the scholarly guild. This system prevented the ideas of maverick exegetes from subverting the carefully regulated social balance maintained between the authority of the `ulama and that of the political authority on the one hand, and the potentially disruptive tendencies of zealots on the other. By contrast, both fundamentalists as well as liberals now employ a hermeneutics that, far from being literal, is if anything, cavalier and eclectic, with a *ratio decidendi* that aims not at finding some preexistent divine authorial intent or at maintaining social order, but rather at legitimating a decidedly parochial social agenda in which textual authority serves as no more than *obiter dicta.*[45] This selective use of the Koran to push

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[44] For a thoroughgoing history and analysis of this intellectual development in Islam, see: G. Makdisi *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh, 1981) and *The Rise of Humanism in Islam and the West, with Special Reference to Scholasticism* (Edinburgh, 1990). For a description of the juridical workings of this guild system see: S. Jackson *Islamic Law and the State: The Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihab al-Din al-Qarafi* (Leiden, 1996)

45 Secular nationalists may well be added to this category as is clear from the research of Frisch, Hillel "Nationalizing a Universal Text: The Quran in Arafat's Rhetoric" Middle Eastern Studies, 2005, 41, 3, May, 321-350. Frisch looks at how Yasser Arafat transforms Koranic parables into a Palestinian nationalistic story to legitimize the struggle against Israel. Somewhat more scholarly is the Iranian `ulama's use of the Koran as explained by Amirpur, Katajun "The Changing Approach to the Text: Iranian Scholars and the Quran" Middle Eastern Studies, 2005, 41, 3, May, 337-350. The Shiite scholars of Iran, Katajun explains, have since 1979, put the sacred text to various uses including the endorsement of science and modernity. Militant Islamists also use the sacred text selectively, rather than literally..For Bin Laden's selective use of Koranic material in support of his vision of a global war against infidels, see: Christopher Dickey, "Bin Laden's Twisted Mission: a bloody misinterpretation of the Qur'an's calls to arms" in Newsweek v. 139 no.6 (February 11 2002) p. 56-7. And for an overview of this selective

ideology, rectify typecasts or even broaden academic inquiry almost always fails to meet its objectives. This last is best exemplified by the recent controversy over the University of North Carolina’s decision to make Michael Sell’s abbreviated Koran required reading for its incoming first year students.[46] Clearly, the verses omitted, as critics rightly pointed out, are as integral to the overall argument about the Koran’s propensity to incite violence as are Sells’ selection of its unwarlike ones. Exposing students only to the latter gave many the impression of an apologetic cover up designed to redeem through omission a semblance of the humanitarian to a text that for them was anything but.[47] So much for the origins and functions of exegetical tools; we turn now to the book in question, its author, Jalal ‘l-Din ‘l-Suyuti, and the era to which he belonged. Suyuti’s biography reflects all of the intellectual and political sediments of the end period of Mamluke rule, when Egypt’s attempts at currency devaluations, price fixings, and excise taxes did little to repair an economy badly damaged by the wanton profligacy of its political elite.[48]

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approach to the sacred text, see: Bernard Lewis “License to Kill: Usama bin Ladin's Declaration of Jihad” in Foreign Affairs 77 no.6 (N/D '98) 14-19. For the history and development of modern terror groups among Muslims, see: Gilles Kepel The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West (Harvard: Harvard University press, 2004); Olivier Roy, “The Radicalization of Sunni Conservative Fundamentalism,” ISIM (International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World) Newsletter no. 2 (March, 1999); and Johannes Jansen, The Neglected Duty, (New York: Macmillan, 1986).

[46] Michael Sells *Approaching the Qur’an: The Early Revelations* (Ashland, 1999)

[47] It was thus not surprising that critics such as James Yacovelli of the Family Policy Network (FPN) would complain that Sell’s book did not correctly portray Islam, whose real “culture is to kill the infidels and drive planes into us, and blow us up.” Or that Bill O`Reilly would compare the Koran as being as complicit in the murderous acts of its devotees as was Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* in the Holocaust.

[48] Much of the material used in this biographical sketch of Suyuti is taken from E.M. Sartain’s excellent 2 volume study titled, *Jalal ‘l-din ‘l-Suyuti: biography and background* New York 1975. The most important source for Suyuti’s biography is an incomplete manuscript of his autobiography, *‘l-Taĥadduth bi ni`mat Allāh* (MS) preserved in the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz in Tubingen, which Sartain has eloquently translated, and which he refers to in his work as the Text. Another noteworthy study is *Al-Suyuti and his works: their place in Islamic scholarship from Mamluk times to the present* in, Mamluk Studies Review [1086-170X] Saleh
yr: 2001 iss: 5 pg: 73. Ignaz Goldziher also looked at Suyuti’s contribution to literature in the article "Zur Charakteristik Gelâl ud-Dîn us-Sujûtî's und seiner literarischen Thätigkeit" which was first published in German in Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Klasse der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Wien), LXIX (1871), 7-28 and later translated and published as: *Ignaz Goldziher on al-Suyuti :a translation of his article of 1871, with additional notes,* in Muslim World 68 Ap 1978, p 79-99

Those who suffered most because of such reforms were Egyptian peasants, whereas the class to which Suyuti belonged, the *arbab 'l-aqlam* or the "bearers of the pen', were largely insulated from economic hardships by the positions they held in the state treasury, the judiciary and, education; Suyuti enjoyed the added protection of his family the 'l-Khudairis, who held high positions in government as judges, comptrollers, and academics. His education, proper, began with the Koran, which he committed to memory at the age of eight, and continued thereafter, to include all the core subjects in classical Islamic studies, the Arabic language, tafsir, and hadith studies; he then received his all important *ijaza* or 'teaching certification" when he was just sixteen.[49] He also studied logic, philosophy and mathematics, but openly admitted a less than adequate comprehension of its complexities; he could so admit without losing credibility, it would seem, because scholarship generally, during his era was quite dismissive of those with mastery over the rational sciences.[50]

Suyuti's prodigious learning was to some extent compromised by his irascible personality: thus whilst many respected his knowledge of virtually every topic related to Islam, others reviled his arrogance and conceit. That he often gloated over his nonpareil academic training, his rapid success, and an almost uncanny ability to solve age old theological and legal conundrums hardly endeared him even to those close to him.[51] There is for example, that notorious clash with 'l-Sakhawi: what began as a simple disagreement over legal opinions ultimately became a personality slugfest between Suyuti and an erstwhile admirer.[52] The relationship was further complicated by his claims to being a mujtahid, or a juridical savant with the intellectual acumen needed to make substantial changes to the sacred law; this function, known as *ijtihad*, had by common consent, come to a halt in the 9th century.[53] That Suyuti would lay claim to this office betrayed not just the level of his conceit, but also a cavalier disregard for the unanimous opinion of his predecessors. This was particularly irksome to a scholarly community whose authority devolved more from completing a successful internship than from producing original ideas.[54] His relationship to Sufism was also complicated, and this because he was, after all, a scholar and not a mystic, with loyalties to the scholarly discipline, as such, and not to the pursuit of ultimate spiritual verities. But in deference to the era in which he lived–and it was one wherein sufism reigned supreme in Egypt as in almost every other part of Islamdom–he conscientiously, avoided criticizing the faith and practice of those who trod the sufi way. Whilst it is true that in discussing the credentials of the exegete he does indeed, critique sufi commentaries, and in particular, the emphasis they place on allegorical interpretations, he takes pains to show that he disapproves only of those interpretations which negate entirely the more obvious meanings given to any particular verse. Personally, Suyuti it seems distinguished between his academic pursuits which he willingly discussed, and his mystical pursuits which he considered private. We know from a manuscript lodged in the Egyptian National Library that whilst in Mecca, Ibn Imam ‘l-Kamiliyyah initiated him into the sufi orders of Abu ‘l-Qasim ‘l-Junaid, Ahmad ‘l-Rifa‘i and ‘Abd ‘l-Qadir ‘l-Jilani.[55] His ambivalence may also have been driven by his ambitions and particularly, his claims to being the promised reformer (*mujaddid*) of the 9th Muslim century, sent at the turn of each century to revive Islam’s pristine teachings. But the ‘ulama’s uneasy relationship with Sufism starts well before Suyuti, in the 8th century in fact, when scholars and mystics went their separate ways in response to the imperial authority of the caliphs. Thanks mainly to the synthesizing efforts of Abu Hamid ‘l-Ghazali—himself an accomplished theologian, jurist, and mystic—that gulf was considerably narrowed, enhancing the standing of the ‘ulama amongst the laity, and bringing Sufism “out of its isolation from the dominant conception of religion and established it as a standard element in the Muslim believer’s life.”[56] In the end Suyuti himself provides reason for his qualified endorsement of Sufism: “It seems” he says: “that the reason for my dedicating myself at the end. . .to the Sufi path and to constant association with the people” (i.e. the Sufis) is a tendency inherited from my ancestors.”[57]

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[49] 'l-Dawudi, fol. 10v.

[50] He thus writes in his biography, Text 138, of his love for grammar and fiqh, describing them as his best subjects. For rhetoric, prose writing and the science of hadith evaluation he shows less love, and even less so for the laws of inheritance. He admits knowing very little about arithmetic and prosody, and as for logic and the philosophical sciences, he says: "I do not occupy myself with them because they are forbidden (*haram*), as 'l-Nawawi and others have stated, and, even if they were permissible, I would not prefer them to the religious sciences."

[51] Suyuti, Marshall Hodgson tells us, "prided himself on how many subjects he had treated which no one before him had dealt with." See his *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* vol. 2, Chicago 1994. P.437

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[52] Muhammad b. `Abd ‘l-Rahman ‘l-Sakhawi’s (d.1497) reputation flows, not so much from his teaching or publishing records, but from him having been a student of the renowned scholar Ibn Hajar ‘l-`Asqalani, author of the highly celebrated commentary on the hadith collection of Muhammad b. Isma`il ‘l-Bukhari. His resentment towards Suyuti and others, some say, stemmed from the fact that, unlike them, he was never able to procure a prestigious teaching position. His biographical dictionary in which he so impugns Suyuti, does however, provide useful information pertinent to hadith transmitters. See, in this regard: Muhammad Mustapha Ziyadah *Al-Mu`rrikhun fi Misr fi ‘l-Qarn ‘l-Khamis `Ashar ‘l-Miladi* (Cairo 1949) For ‘l-Sakhawi’s version of this incident, see: Muhammad b. `Abd ‘l-Rahman ‘l-Sakhawi *‘l-Dau` ‘l-Lami` li Ahl ‘l-Qarn ‘l-Tas`i* 12vols. (Cairo 1973). In it he speaks derisively of Suyuti, both as a person and as a scholar. Suyuti returns the favor with an equally contemptuous riposte titled: *‘l-Kawi li dimagh ‘l-Sakhawi*. A full account of this personality clash is to be found in Suyuti’s *Tadrib ‘l-Rawi fi Sharh Taqrib ‘l-Nawawi* Riyadh, 1994. Also see, ‘Abd ‘l-Wahhab ‘l-Hammudah *Safahat min Tarikh Misr fi `Asr ‘l-Suyuti* (1965)

[53] In one place he is quoted as saying, for instance: “God has established us in the post of Ijtihad, so that we may explain our legal thoughts that will serve to revive the faith”. As a result, Ibn Hajr ‘l-Haithami says, scholars banded together to attack him by drawing questionnaires meant to test his jurisic aptitude; Suyuti, for the most dismissed such challenges, insisting instead, that no living scholar equaled him in learning and intelligence. See, in this regard: ‘l-Manawi *Faid ‘l-Qadir: Sharh ‘l-Jami` ‘l-Saghar* Beirut 1971. The earliest discussion on the qualifications of the mujtahid appears in Abu Husain ‘l-Basri’s *‘l-Mu`tamad fi Usul ‘l-Fiqh* (Damascus, 1964).Also see, Joseph Schacht *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford 1964) pp.70-71; J.N. Anderson *Law Reform in the Muslim World* (London 1976), p.7. For an alternative to these views, see: Wael Hallaq *Was the Gate of Ijtihad Closed* in The International Journal of Middle East Studies 16 (1984), 3-41

[54] Except for a few periods in Muslim history when innovative thinking was highly prized, for the most part academic tutelage, oral transmissions, and dictations remained the standard by which credentials were vetted. Suyuti, for instance, was criticized for writing about the modes of Quranic recitation (*‘l-qira’a)* because he had not

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been formally inducted into the reading fraternity. See, in this regard Muhammad b. `Abd ‘l-Rahman ‘l-Sakhawi *‘l-Dau’ ‘l-Lami` li Ahl ‘l-Qarn ‘l-Tasi`* 12 vols. (Cairo 1934)

[55] I refer here to the work, *Lubs ‘l-Khirqah wa talqin ‘l-dhikr wa ‘l-suhbaĥ* (MS) ENL, Majami` Qawalah, 25.

[56] Ignaz Goldziher, *Introducation to Islamic Theology and Law* Princeton, 1981 p. 160

[57] Ibid., 37

A word about the compilation of the Itqan: by today's standards, Suyuti's method of compiling the Itqan would, at best, be considered slipshod, and at worst, blatant plagiarism. To a culture such as ours which extols creativity and ingenuity over tradition and continuity plagiarism, or literary theft is perhaps the only contemptible infraction towards which we as academics and scholars show little sympathy. It would therefore strike us as odd, if not downright duplicitous, that someone with the academic credentials of Suyuti would build his credentials on works filled with material improperly appropriated. It must however be remembered that the convention of quoting sources precisely, and citing references, which scholars today consider natural, almost instinctive one may say is, to quote Jacques Barzun and Henry Graff, no more than "a very sophisticated act, peculiar to a civilization that uses printed books, believes in evidence, and makes a point of assigning credit or blame in a detailed and a verifiable way."[58] Transposing entire chapters without acknowledgment, or grafting one text on to some other, whilst unacceptable by modern standards, was however, not inappropriate to the literary ethics of 16th century Egypt. In the tradition of Islamic scholarship, the value of any work was determined, not by its originality and creative impulse, but by its connection, in form and content, to the "Golden Age" of Islam, and to its pious ancestry. By transmitting words and ideas first uttered by the pious ancestors (the 'l-S*alaf 'l-Salih)* or threading them into one's own material gave such material instant recognition. Not that Muslim scholarship took plagiarism lightly: as elsewhere it was roundly condemned. But the practice was perceived differently and in a slightly different context: more was said about plagiarism in poetry than in prose, and particularly with borrowing motifs (*ma'ani*), intimating narratives indirectly, or inserting stanzas (tadmin) without acknowledgement. Also, more attention was paid to the word than to meaning, to form than to content, and to the classical than to the innovative; this last, which Lovejoy calls chronological primitivism, and which is emblematic of the Hellenistic concept of linear time as well, was the consequence of the perception that civilizations become increasingly nihilistic through time, that faith and morality decreases from generation to generation, and that evil ultimately trumps good.[59] Such perspectives, von Grunebaum rightly points out, "cannot but establish the authority of the earlier generations and depreciate whatever achievement the contemporaries may have to offer".[60] But this in no way devalues the overall contributions of both the book as well as its author: the Itqan, remains an indispensable reference for those involved in traditional exegesis (tafsir) as well as in modern criticism. And along with such luminaries as Bukhari in hadith literature, and Tabari in history, it establishes Suyuti as the authority in the study of the Koran. As for the structure of the work itself, it must be said that the Itqan is a compilation quite unlike any other, even by traditional standards. Kenneth Nolin, in his study of its sources, shows that close on sixty percent of the material used in the Itqan may be traced to some four hundred authors, and well over four hundred and fifty different works.[61] To introduce and identify these disparate sources Suyuti uses formulaic prefixes, such as: "It is said" (*qala*), or "some of them have said" (qala ba'duhum), or "someone else has said" (*qala ghairuhu*). More specifically, when introducing material from the apostolic traditions (hadith) he uses formulas such as "extracted" (*akhraja*), "related" (haka) and "narrated" (*rawa*); and when introducing the opinions of later scholars he more commonly uses "he said" (qala). And in transmitting such traditions Suyuti closely follows classical conventions such as transmission chains, authenticated

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[58] See, in this regard: Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, 3rd edition (New York, 1977),

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[59] A.O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related ideas in Antiquity* (1935); cf. Esp. Pp 2-3

[60] Gustave E. Von Grunebaum "The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory" in *Journal of Near Easter Studies* vol.3, no.4 (Oct., 1944) 253

traditions, and complete citations. But such standards are not applied to other sources, which explain why such material is often omitted, emended, or abbreviated. Another peculiarity worth mentioning is the fact that secondary sources by prominent scholars are sometimes preferred to primary sources from scholars such as: Ibn ‘l-Anbari[62], Ibn ‘l-Jazari[63], ‘l-Tabari[64], ‘l-Zarkashi[65], ‘l-Baihaqi[66], and ‘l-Bukhari[67]. Of these, perhaps the most quoted would be the *Burhan* of Badr ‘l-Din ‘l-Zarkashi, without which by Suyuti’s own admission, his own Itqan would not have been produced. And whilst it is only credited some forty times, actual use of *Burhan* material occurs far more frequently in various forms. It is mentioned by name only if it enjoys some qualitative advantage over other sources, or when the borrowing is literal, or when Suyuti takes exception to it; Burhan material may also appear in places as no more than a selective patchwork of original words and phrases. (52) In what Nolin calls “parallel dependency” the Itqan also combines Burhan material with “many other, more specific books, or sometimes a sequence of different ones on the same subject.” (55) But identifying such combinations are complicated by their frequency and by Suyuti’s own embarrassment at the extent of the borrowings. The Itqan’s semantical and lexical oddities, its truncated names and titles, and its unvoweled letters, all

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[61] Much of the material that follows is based on Nolin’s unpublished dissertation, titled *The Itqan and its Sources: A Study of Al-Itqan Fi `Ulum Al-Quran By Jalal Al-Din Al-Suyuti With Special Reference to Al-Burhan Fi `Ulum Al-Qur’an By Badr Al-Din Al-Zarkashi* (Hartford, 1968)

[62] Ibn al-Anbari, Abu al-Hasan Muhammad b. `Umar b. Ya`qub is otherwise famous for having composed an elegy for Ibn Baqiya, `Izz al-Dawla’s minister. See `Asrar al-Balagha of `Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani ed. Helmut Ritter (Istanbul 1954) pp. 321-322

[63] This is the famous author of Ghayat al-Nihaya fi Tabaqat al-Qurra’ ed. G. Bergstrasser and O. Pretzl (Cairo 1932) a biographical dictionary of the most prominent Qur’an reciters.

[64] Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari (839-923 c.e.)is more renowned in scholarly circles both Muslim and western for his *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* , a universal history that begins with creation and ends with the author’s era. See Montgomery Watt ‘s introduction in *The history of al-Tabari* vol. 6 (Albany 1988)

[65] Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi’s work *al-Burhan fi `Ulum al-Qur’an* features prominently in Suyuti’s *Itqan*

[66] Abu Bakr Ahmed b. al-Hussain al-Baihaqi (994c.e.) a student of Hakim al-Nishapuri was actually born in Khasrajand in the district of Baihaq

[67] Muhammad b. Ismail b. Ibrahim al-Bukhari (810-) the famous hadith scholar and author of the *al-Sihah* was born in the city of Bukhara in what is today Uzbekistan.

further complicate its comprehension. As Nolin points out, a verb which is active or passive may well indicate the source and quality of the material cited, a literal transposition of some other source, or the first words of a new quotation. Distinguishing between direct and indirect borrowing admittedly alleviates the problem somewhat: in the former case the material is borrowed verbatim, whilst in the latter, it forms part of Suyuti's critique of such material. At times he by passes 'l-Zarkashi, to quote directly from the primary sources, whilst in others he quotes the original Burhan material in full. To determine such additions one looks for certain formulae: verbs such as "extracted" or "derived" generally allude to material taken from hadith literature, whereas words such as "he said" allude to material taken from other writers on the topic.

Another of Suyuti's oddities is his tendency to introduce outside sources without warning: in ii, 58:10, for instance, Ibn Hisham is first quoted, followed by 'l-Zamakhshari, and a few lines later, by 'Izz b. Abd 'l-Salam. Then Ibn Hisham is again quoted together with excerpts from a section of the Burhan in which 'Izz b. 'Abd 'l-Salam along with the title of his book is mentioned. In the same section Ibn Jami' is mentioned, as part of a quotation taken from the Burhan, only to be quoted again, not from the Burhan this time, but from the original; one possible reason for this is that Suyuti may have used both texts simultaneously for this section. The Burhan appears most prominently in the special sections, and in places, it is set off parenthetically from the main text, whilst at others it is put under separate headings; such headings themselves are sometimes replaced by synonyms. As for the differences between these two texts, and there are many, these have been ascribed to inadequate editing and printing standards. Centuries of reprints have in places caused significant changes to the script, and this is particularly problematic with Arabic

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where dropping even a single dot may change the gender, or the form of the verb. For instance, Koranic verses that are identical except for a single dot are cited in both texts to illustrate the same point, but the citation itself at times appears identical and at others different; (SEE 73, note 17 & 18) needless to say; this causes considerable angst among the faithful who believe in the inerrancy of the sacred text. Some of the other changes reflect Suyuti's own preferences: he, for instance almost always prefers masculine verb forms over the feminine. (See p 75, note 25) He also seems to prefer certain names, places and even book titles over others. When combining sources Suyuti is most likely to use introductory terms such as: "I say" (qultu), "meaning" (ya'ni), and "that is" (ayy). But it is when he uses "in my opinion" ('indi) that one is able to distinguish between Suyuti, the editor, and Suyuti, the analyst. This usually occurs when he is about to choose from amongst several opinions which he has cited, as in, for example, the debate on the first complete chapter to be revealed in its entirety. (P.98, note 42) The other formulae he uses to express his personal opinion include: "the correct view" ('l-sawab), "The preferred view" ('l-mukhtar) and "The most correct view" ('l-asahh) His comments, it must be said, are generally terse, and to the point, and where appropriate, he refers readers to his other works on the same topic. Thus, in the section on the causes of revelation he points readers to his separate, and more exhaustive study on this very topic titled *Lubab 'l-Nuqul fi Asbab 'l-Nuzul*[68]

Lest one criticise Suyuti too harshly for his scholarly integrity or a lack thereof, one must remember that his was an era fraught with the orthographic difficulties unknown to us today. Access to primary sources which we might take for granted, for instance, was a privilege enjoyed only by the affluent or by those with social standing. Even Cairo's relatively large collection of ancient manuscripts, for instance, was mainly in private hands with owners insisting that they remain in the library and be perused only in their presence. Scholars with limited resources like Suyuti would often take recourse to stealthily transcribing sources in book stores to their private notebooks; in so doing they obviously increased the likelihood of errors creeping in. All in all therefore, the compilation of the Itqan, notwithstanding Suyuti’s questionable methodology, is a remarkable achievement, which still serves those engaged in serious exegetical and literary analysis. This was no cut and paste project: it took tremendous skill to find, edit and assimilate its disparate sources into what is undoubtedly a quite coherent, readable reference work on the Qur’an.

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[68] Suyuti *Lubab 'l-Nuqul fi Asbab 'l-Nuzul* (Cairo, n.d.)

Sabab `l-Nuzūl

Reasons For Revelation

Introduction

The 11th century c.e. is as far back as one can go to find works that dealt exclusively with material said to establish the times, places, and circumstances that prompted the revelation of the Koranic verses. The original *Asb*āb works as they are sometimes called are perhaps no more than four and it is to them that all subsequent independent works or references within other works may be traced.[1] In Andrew Rippin's study of the role of asbab material in early exegesis four major texts are considered prime. These are the Kitab al-nuzul of al-Wahidī (d.1075), Asbāb al-nuzul wa qisas al-Furqaniya of Muhammad b. As`ad al-Iraqi (d. 1171) lubab al-Nuqul fi asbab al-Nuzul of al-Suyut (d. 1501) and a text in the Berlin state library wrongly ascribed to al-Ja`barī.[2] Al-Wahidi's work restricts itself to some 83 chapters of the Koran and mainly cites asbab material appearing in apostolic traditions with full chains of transmission.

Reasons For Revelation

A group of scholars specialized in this subject, of whom the most senior would be `Alī b. Madīnī, the teacher of Bukhārī. The most famous work on this subject, notwithstanding its brevity, would be that of 'l-Wāhidī. Ja`barī further summarized this work by omitting its chain of narrators and adding nothing more to it. Shaikh `l-Islām, Abū 'l-Fadl b. Hajr compiled a book in the form of notes on this subject but died before its completion. I have not come across a complete copy thereof. I too have compiled a work on this topic, which I titled *Lubāb 'l-Nuqūl fī asbāb 'l-nuzūl*, and it is indeed unique in being both comprehensive and brief. Ja`barī has said: "The revelation of the Qur'ān falls into two categories:

i) That which was revealed without precedence.

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[1] Rippin, Andrew *The Quranic 'Asbab al-Nuzul Material: An Analysis of its Development and use in Exegesis* Ph.D. diss., McGill University (Canada) This work which appears in revised form as: *The Exegetical Genre Asbab al-Nuzul : A Bibliographical and Terminological Survey* Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (London, 1985) is still the primary source in English for the study of *asbab* material and its contribution to Koranic exegesis. Another important work in this regard is the same author's *Approaches to the history of the interpretation of the Quran* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1988);*The Quran : formative interpretation* (Brookfield, VT : Ashgate, 1999);

[2]

ii) That which was revealed due to an incident or in response to a question.

Many questions pertain to this subject.

Question One

The merits of determining the reasons for revelation: One scholar claims that it has no merit, seeing that it is so similar to history. He erred. It has in fact several merits, which include the following:

1. Knowing the wisdom that prompted the promulgation of a law
2. Limiting the ambit of a rule, at least for those who subscribe to the principle that meanings should be determined by the revelatory context (and not by the plain text as such).
3. A word with a general meaning is at times rendered specific through evidence. Where the revelatory context is known the meaning will be restricted accordingly to the exclusion of all other scenarios. This is so because context is considered definitive (*qaţ`ī);* in such cases using rational arguments is prohibited. This, as reported by the judge, Abu Bakr in the work `l-Taqrīb is the consensus of the scholars. No regard must thus be given to those isolated opinions that allow this.
4. Attaining the proper meaning of a word and removing all ambiguity. Wāĥidī has said: "it is impossible to interpret a verse without reference to the story behind it, and its revelation". Ibn Daqīq `l-`Id has said: "Knowing the revelatory context is a powerful tool to unraveling the meaning of the Qur'ān". And Ibn Taymiyyah has said: "knowing the revelatory context helps understand the verse, for knowledge of the revelatory context provides knowledge of the cause itself. Marwān b. `l-Hakam had difficulty in understanding the verse "lā taĥsabanna allathīna yafraĥūna bimā atou.. . ."[3] (3:188). He said: " if every man was punished for rejoicing in what was given to him, and in loving being praised for things he had not done, then we should all be punished, every one of us!". Ibn `Abbās then explained to him that the verse was revealed in regard to People of the Book, who when asked something by the Prophet (s) would hide it from him.; they would instead point him elsewhere, and tell him that they had indeed informed him as he had requested. For this they wanted his commendation. This was reported by Bukhārī and Muslim.

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[3] "Think not of those who rejoice in what they have done . . ."

It is reported that `Uthmān b. Maź`ūn and`Amr b. Ma`dīkarib would cite the verse: "laisa `alā allathīna āmanū wa `amilū `l-śāliĥāti junāĥ fimā ţa`imū. . ."[4] (5:93) in their claim that: "Wine is permissible!", using the verse as a proof. But if they had known the revelatory context of the verse they would not have said that. When wine was declared unlawful people asked: What of those who died in the path of God but drank wine which is impure, as well.?" In response, this verse was revealed. Ahmed, Nasa'ī and others quote this tradition. The same is true for the condition in the verse "wa allā'ī ya'isna min `l-maĥīď min nisā'ikum in irtabtum fa `iddatuhunna thalāthatu ash hur. . ."[5] (65:4) which confused some scholars; and this led to the Zahirites concluding that: "there is no waiting period (*iddah*) menopausal women if they are not irregular". This however is clarified by the rc: on the authority of Ibn 'Ubayy, Hākim reports that when the verse in Baqarah pertaining to the waiting period for women was revealed, they said that a number of women, comprising of the aged and the young, are not accounted for in the waiting period verses. In response, the verse in question was revealed. It is clear from this that the verse addresses those who were ignorant of their status with regard to the waiting period: were they bound by the waiting period rules or not? And was their waiting period the same as those mentioned Baqarah or not? Thus the words *in irtabtum* applies if their status confuses you and you know not how they ought to observe their waiting periods? This therefore, is their rule. 1

And in the case of the verse " fa aynamā tuwallū fa thamma wajhu Allāh"[6] (2:115), if we confined its meaning to that of the lexicon it would prescribe that the person engaged in the daily prayers (*salāt*) is not required to face Mecca (*qiblah*) whether on journey or at home. But this is contrary to the consensus (ijmā`) of the scholars. Having knowledge of the rc however, apprizes one to the fact that this rule applies only to supererogatory prayers whilst traveling, and to that person who erred in determining the direction of prayer and realized that whilst still in prayer. There are however, variant opinions on this rule.

And the literal meaning of the verse " inna `l-śafā wa `l-marwat min sha`ā'ir Allāh. . .

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[4] "Those who believe and do righteous deeds, bear no sin for having eaten. . ."

[5] "And those of your women who has passed the age of monthly, for them the iddah (prescribed period), if you have doubt, is three months. . ."

[6] "So wherever you turn, there is the Face of God"

.”[7] (2:185) does not make obligatory running between the two hills (*‘l-sa`y*), and based on this reading some have ruled that it is indeed not obligatory. Ayesha however objected to `Urwah’s interpretation by citing the rc. It was revealed in response to those Companions who considered the *`l-sa`y* a sinful relic of the days of ignorance.

5. Discarding the imagination of `l-ĥaśr (restriction). The gist of ‘l-Shāfi`ī’s opinion on the verse: “qul lā ajidu fī mā ūĥiya ilayya muĥarraman. . .”[8] (6:145) is that it was revealed in response to the Meccan pagans when they made unlawful what God made lawful, and made lawful what God made unlawful; they thus rebellious and obstinate {unto them ,and they were opposed to and in violation (to God }. The verse had thus come to oppose their objectives. It is tantamount to Him saying: “Only that which you consider unlawful is in fact lawful, and only that which you consider lawful is in fact unlawful.” It falls in the same category as one who says : “eat no sweets today! To which you reply: : “I will eat nothing but sweets today!” The aim here is to contradict, and not to negate or affirm facts. It is as if the Almighty is saying: “Nothing is unlawful except that which you make lawful; this inlcudes carrion, blood, swine and that which is slaughtered as sacrifice to some other deity. This however, does not imply the lawfulness of things beyond these because the objective is to confirm the unlawful and not the lawful. Imām ‘l-ĥaramain (‘l-Juwaini) has said: “this is indeed a highly subtle observation, which if ‘l-Shāfi`ī had not preempted we would not have been able to oppose Mālik in his confining the unlawfuls only to those mentioned in the verse.

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[7] “Verily! as-śafā and al-Marwah (two mountains in Mecca) are the symbols of God. . .”

[8] “Say (O Muĥammad): “ I do not find in that which have been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten. . .”

6. Knowing the person in whose name the verse was revealed and identifying the ambiguity therein. And with regard to the verse “wa allathī qā la li wālidayhi uff lakumā”[9] (46:17) Marwān would say that it was revealed in reference to Abd `l-Raĥmān b. Abu Bakr, until Ayesha responded to him by identifying its rc.

Second mas’alah (legal verdict)

Juristic theoreticians differ with regard to the principle: “Wisdom lies in the generality of the words rather than in the specifics of its rc.” We believe that it is former that is most correct. After all, many a verse was revealed in response to some cause, whereas scholars unanimously extended its application to areas beyond such cause. Thus, the verse of *źihār* (a pre-Islamic form of divorce) was revealed in regard to Salamah b.śaĥr; the verse of *li`ān* (a sworn allegation of adultery)was revealed in regard to ĥilāl b. Umayyah; and the slander ordinances were revealed in regard to those who slandered `Ayesha, and these were all then extended to apply to others as well. Those who give no credence to the literal word counter that these and other such rules are established by way of other proofs, just as verses are unanimously restricted to their rc where such proof exists. In connection with the chapter *‘l-Humazat* Zamakhsharī had this to say: “it is quite permissible to consider the cause specific and the rebuke general in order to include those who might engage in the said evil. The cause would then be considered an allusion.

I say: : “Of the proofs that give credence to the view that the literal word is primary is the Companion’s and other’s free and widespread usage of the general meaning of the verses that were revealed in special contexts as argumentation. Ibn Jarīr said: “Muĥammad b. Abū Ma`shar narrated to me that Abū Abū Ma`shar Najīĥ informed us that he heard Sa`īd ‘l-Maqburī discuss with Muĥammad b. Ka`b ‘l-Quraźī. Sa`īd said: “in parts of the Book of God it says that there are amongst the servants of God, those with tongues sweeter than honey, hearts more bitter than aloe, who wear fine clothes made of sheep skin, and obtain this world by means of the faith”. Muĥammad b. Ka`b said: “this is indeed, in the Book of God, in the verse “wa min `l-nās man yu`jibuka qauluhu fī `l-ĥayāt `l-dunyā. . .”[10] (2:204). Sa`īd said: “do you know for whom it was revealed?”. Muĥammad b. Ka`b said: “indeed! The verse was revealed in regard to some man, but became general thereafter.

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[9] “He who says to his parents: “fie upon you both”

[10] “And of mankind there is he whose speech may please you in this worldly life. . .”

If you were to say: “Here’s Ibn `Abbās however, who did not consider the verse “ lā taĥsabanna allathīna yafraĥūna. . .”[11] (3:188) to be general, but restricted it instead to the story of the People of the Book about which it was revealed. I would say: “My response to that would be: That a word is more generally than the situation which caused its revelation is certainly not unknown to him. He however, was explaining that the objective of the word was indeed restricted . This is similar to the verse: to the Prophet (s) explanation of the word “*`l-źulm*” in the verse “wa lam yalbisū īmānahum bi źulm”[12] (6:82) as association (*shirk*) which he deduced from the verse “inna `l-shirk la źulmun `aźīm”[13] (31:13). This, despite the understanding of the Companions that the word *źulm* applies generally to all forms of injustice. And there is in fact a report from Ibn `Abbās that confirms him giving credence to the generality argument. He for instance, held this view with regard to the theft verse even though it was first revealed concerning a women who stole. Ibn Abū Hātim said: “`Ali b. Husain narrated from Muĥammad b. Abū Hammād, who quotes Abū Thumailah b. Abū Mu’min from Najdah `l-Hanafī who said: “ I asked Ibn `Abbās whether the verse “ wa `l-sāriq wa `l-sāriqat fa iqta`ū aidīhimā”[14] (5:38) is specific or general? He said that it is general.

Ibn Taymiyyah has said : “Often, words such as “this verse is revealed concerning such and such a person” are used, especially when such a person is mentioned, as in the verse of źihār, which some say was revealed in regard to the wife of Thābit b. Qays, or the verse of *kalālah* which was revealed in regard to Jābir b. `Abd Allāh, or the verse “wa an uĥkum baynahum”[15] (5:49) which was revealed in regard to the Banū Quraiźa and the Naďīr. The same is true of verses said to have been revealed in regard to a group of Meccan pagans, or a group of the Jews and Christians, or a group of Muslims. Those making such assertions are not of the opinion that the rule that the verse establishes is restricted to those groups to the exclusion of all others. No Muslim or sane person can ever say that. People, in spite of their different opinions about the generality of a particular word used in a given cause, still ask the question: “should the general word be specified by its cause?” No one says that the general word in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is specific to some person. At most it extends at least to that genre of people who share such attributes. And the general depends not on the word alone. As for that verse which has a rc, if it is a command or prohibition, then it will apply to the individual concerned as well as to those who fall in this category. If however, it consists of praise or dispraise then too it will it will apply to the individual concrened as well as to those who fall in this category.

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[11] “Think not that those who rejoice in what they have done. . .”

[12] “And confuse not their belief with źulm (wrong) ”

[13] “Verily joining others in worship with God is a great wrong indeed”

[14] “And the male thief and the female thief, cut off their hands”

[15] “And so judge (O Muhammad) among them by what God. . .”

Note

You know from what was said that words are considered to general. As for that verse which was revealed in regard to a specific person, and whose words are not general, it will be restricted entirely as such. An example is the verse "wa sa yujannabuha `l-Atqā allathī yu'tī mālahu yatazakkā"[16] (92:17 - 18). Scholars are unanimous that it was revealed in regard to Abu Bakr al-śiddīq. And by looking at this verse in conjunction with the verse "inna akramakum `inda Allāh atqākum"[17] (49:13) Fakhr `l-Dīn Rāzī
concludes that Abū Bakr is indeed the most virtuous person after the Messenger of God. Those who thinks that the verse is general, applicable to anyone who falls in that category, based on the principle, are wrong: the verse has no general form; the *alif* and the *lām* give a general meaning when it is a relative pronoun or is definite in the plural form. A group of scholars add "or when in single form" on condition that there is no article of *`ahd* (when the article *al* used to distinguish a noun known to hearer). The *lām* in the word "`l-atqā" is not a relative noun because the definite article latter, through common consensus, does not create a relative noun with a noun in the superlative form. The word "`l-atqā" is not plural but singular and the *`ahd* is present, {especially with the distinguish and non-partnership which is attained with the form of *aF`alu* .}{ The view that it is general, is null and void, and definiteness through specification is established and confining the ruling to the person about whom the verse was revealed.}

Third mas'alah (legal verdict)

The Similarities of the Revelatory Cause with the literal word

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[16] "And the pious will be far removed from it (hell). He who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification"

[17] "Verily, the most honorable of you by God is he who is pious"

Already mentioned is the fact that the form of the cause is definitely part of the general Many a verse was revealed due to specific causes and then placed with suitable general verses keeping the systematic approach of the Qur'ān and context in mind. In this way the specification comes close to the form of the cuase in being definitively part of the general. Thus has Subukī preferred the view that it is a middle category below the cause and above the causeless. An example would be the verse: " a lam tara ilā allathīna, ūtū naśīban yu'minūna bi ʻl-jibt wa `l-ţāghūt. . ."[18] (4:51) which refers to Ka`b b. `l-Ashraf and other Jewish scholars who on arrival in Mecca and after witnessing those killed in Badr, urged the pagans to take revenge by doing battle with the Prophet (s). They then asked them : " who is more guided, Muĥammad and his companions or us? They said: "you are", even though they knew otherwise through descriptions given in their book that applied to the Prophet (s), and even though they had pledged not to hide this. This was thus, a binding trust which they flouted when, driven by jealousy of the Prophet (s), they told the pagans, "you are more guided". This verse together with this utterance, carries a threat that serves to prescribe the opposite of it, and incorporates the requirement that trusts must be fulfilled, which in this case happens to be the explication of the Prophet's attributes as being the one described in their book. This is in keeping with the verse: "inna Allāh ya'muru kum an tu'addū`l-amānāt ilā ahlihā"[19] (4:58). This applies generally to all trusts, whereas that is specific to a single trust, the attributes of the Prophet (s) in the manner so described. In writing the general follows the specific even though it was revealed after it. Congruence requires that the object of the specific be included in the general. And this is why This relationship It is appropriate that indication of the specific should be included in the general. Therefore, Ibn ʻl-`Arabī in his exegesis that the arrangement is justified because it gives notice of the People of the Book's concealment of the attributes of the Prophet (s) and their assertion: "The pagans are indeed more rightly guided!". This was dishonesty on their part, which sort of forced the discussion to include all kinds of trusts.

Some scholars have said: "the delayed revelation of the verse of trusts, some six years afterwards, does not contradict this because time is a factor in establishing rc, and not relationships. The objective after all, is only to place a verse which is best suited to it. Verses were revealed in accordance with their causes, and the Prophet (s) would instruct that they be inserted in suitable places that he knew through God to be their rightful places.

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[18] "Have you not considered those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They believe in Sorcery and ţāghūt (anything worshiped other than God). . ."

[19] "God, indeed, commands you to return trusts back to its rightful owners."

The fourth mas'alah (legal verdict)

Deterrmining the Revelatory Cause

Wāĥidī said: "Opinions about the rc of the Book are not permissible except from those among the witnesses of revelation who happened to have heard such reports and researched its application. Muĥammad b. Sīrīn said: "I asked `Ubaidah about a verse in the Qur'ān", to which he replied: "Fear the Lord and speak truthfully! Those with knowledge of the circumstances that prompted God to reveal the Qur'an have passed on".

Another scholar has said: "knowledge of the rc was abtained by the Companions by way of judicial matters. At times some of them not certain would aks: "I think this verse was revealed in regard to such and such person", as was reported by all six scholars, on the authority of `Abd Allāhb.b. Zubair who said: " Zubair disputed with a man concerning the flow of water on land at `l-ĥarrah. The Prophet (s) said: "O Zubair, Irrigate (your farm), then send the water to your neighbour". The Ansārī then said: " O Messenger of God, is this because he is your cousin!". His face changed colors. . ." Zubair said: " I believe that the verse " falā wa rabbika lā yu'minūn ĥattā yuĥakkimūka fī mā shajara bayna hum "[20] (4:65) was revealed only in that context.

In the work *Ulūm `l-ĥadīth* Ĥākim said: "If a Companion who was witness to the period of revelation provides information about a verse of the Qur'ān as being revealed in some context, then that tradition would be considered a sound tradition (*hadith musnad*). This view is shared by Ibn 'l-Śalāĥ and others who cite the tradition in Muslim narrated on the authority of Jābir in which he says: : "the Jews used to say that the child born of a sexual encounter in which the woman's vagina is penetrated from the rear will be cross eyed." As a result God revealed: the verse "nisā'ukum ĥarthun lakum"[21] (:223)".

Ibn Taymiyyah has said: "Statements such as: "this verse was revealed in such and such context at times refers to the rc and at others to that which was integral to the verse itself without necessarily being the rc. This is like saying “He meant such and such by this verse.” Scholars differ when a Companion says: “this verse was revealed in regard to this”. Will it be considered a musnad tradition as when the rc wherefore the verse came down is mentioned, or will it be considered as commentary from him without having the status of a sound tradition? Bukhārī considers this a sound tradition whereas others do not. Most of Musnad compendia fall into this category, like the Musnad of Ahmad and others. Opposed to this is where the cause that prompted the revelation is mentioned which all of them include in the sound category.

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[20] "But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (O Muĥammad) judge in all disputes between them"

[21] "Your wives are a tilth unto you"

Zarkashī said in the work *`l-Burhān* : “it is an established fact from the custom of the Companions and the Successors that one of them says: “this verse was revealed in regard to this”, they meant thereby that this incorporates a certain rule, and not that it is its rc. This falls into the category of adjudicating proofs through the verses, and not of transmitting just the events as such.

I said: “That which is documented about rc includes only those verses revealed during the period of its occurrence. Which would then exclude Wāĥidī’s assertion that the chapter *`l-Fīl* was revealed as a result of the Abyssinian’s advent with them That was certainly not the rc of anything! Rather, this belongs to the category of material relating to historical events. Such is the case with the stories relating to Noah’s people as well as those of the `Ād , the Thamūd, the building of the Ka`bah, etc. Similarly, God’s taking of Abraham as a friend in the verse: “wa ittakhatha Allāh Ibrāhīm khalīl”[22] (4:125) is obviously not one of the reasons for the revelation of the Qur’an.

Note

As mentioned previously the statement of a Companion falls into the category of the sound. If it emanates from a Successor then it is also considered sound (*marfū`*) and of the *mursal* category but only if its chain of transmitters is authentic. Some scholars of exegesis like Mujāhid , `Ikrimah and Sa`īd b. Jubair accept the reports of the Companions or do so by corroborating these with other *mursal* traditions.

The fifth mas’alah (legal verdict)

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[22] “And God has taken Abraham as a friend”

The exegete often mentions multiple rc for a single verse in which case the best way of determining the most authentic cause would be to examine the actual expression. If one of them expresses himself by saying: “it was revealed because of such and such” and the other by saying the same but mentioning a different incident, then as mentioned previously, the latter would be considered commentary and not the rc. There would be no contradiction between the two views if the wording accommodates them both. An explanation hereof will appear in the section seventy eight.

If one were to say: “it was revealed in regard to such and such”, whilst some other person asserted a cause that contradicted it, then the latter would be given credence, and the former would be considered deductive thinking. An example of this would be Bukhārī’s tradition quoted on the authority of Ibn `Umar, who said : “the verse “nisā’ukum ĥarthun lakum”[23] (2:223) was revealed in regard to sexual intercourse from the back. But as mentioned previously the report of Jābir clearly contradicts it. Credence would be given to Jābir’s report because it is transmitted from Prophet (s) himself, whereas the view of Ibn `Umar should be considered law making. He caused Ibn `Abbās to have doubts, and he thus mentioned a tradition similar to that of Jābir, as quoted by Abu Dāwūd and Hākim.

If one person mentions a rc and another person mentions something different, then the report having a sound chain of transmitters would be given credence. This is exemplified by a tradition quoted by Bukhārī, Muslim and others on the authority of Jundub, who said that the Prophet (s) complained of illness and did not perform voluntary prayers for one night or two. A woman came to him and said: “O Muĥammad, I see your Satan has abandoned you! Then God revealed the verse “wa `l-Dhuĥā * wa `l-layl ithā sajā * mā wadda`aka rabbuka wa mā qalā”[24] (93:1 - 3).

Tabarānī and Ibn Abū Shaybah quote Hafs b. Maisarah who quotes his mother, who quotes her mother–a servant of the Messenger of God–as saying: “a puppy entered the house of the Prophet (s), crept under the bed, and died. For four days no revelation came to the prophet (s). He then said: “O Khaulah, what’s happening in the house of the Messenger of God? Angel Gabriel has not come to me? I said to myself: “if only you cleaned and swept the house regularly!” I got down with the broom under the bed and removed the puppy .

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[23] “ your wives are a tilth for you”

[24] “By the forenoon . By the night when it darkens. Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor hates you”

Whereupon the Prophet (s) came with his beard trembling; whenever he trembled it was a sure sign that revelation was coming to him. God then revealed the verses “wa `l-Duĥā” until the verse “fatarďā”.

In the commentary to the work of Bukhārī Ibn Hajr says: “the story about Gabriel’s delay due to the puppy is well known but it being its rc is however far fetched. In its chain of transmitters is an unknown person, and so the report which would be considered reliable is that which appears in the Sahīih collection.

Another example is the tradition narrated by Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abū Ĥātim, by way of Ibn Abū Hātim, who quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying: “when the Messenger of God migrated to Madīnah, God commanded him to face Jerusalem in prayer. The Jews were ecstatic! He did this for some ten months or more. He however had a preference for the Abrahamic direction of prayer, and would beseech God and look to the skies expectantly. God then revealed: “fa wallū wujūhakum shaţrah”[25] (2:150). This made the Jews suspicious and so they asked: “what turned them from the prayer direction they were on? In response God then revealed the verse “ qul li Allāh `l-mashriq wa `l-maghrib”[26] (2: 115) and He said “fa ainamā tuwallū fa thamma wajhu Allāh”[27] (2:115).

Ĥākim and others quote Ibn `Umar as saying: “ the verse “ fa ainamā tuwallū fa thamma wajhu Allāh” was revealed to allow facing any direction one’s mount chose during a voluntary prayer.

Tirmidhī quotes a tradition of `Amir b. Rabā`a, one he deemed weak, in which he said: “we were traveling through a dark night and knew not the direction to Mecca. Every man from among us then prayed on his own. On awakening the next day, we mentioned this to the Prophet (s). So the verse was revealed”. Dāruqutnī quotes a similar tradition from Jābir, with a chain of transmitters that is also weak.

Ibn Jarīr quotes Mujāhid as saying: “when the verse “ud`ūnī astajib lakum”[28] (40:60) was revealed, people asked: “Where should we turn to? So the verse was revealed. This tradition is *mursal*. And he quotes Qatādah as saying that the Prophet (s) said: “One of your brothers has indeed died, so perform the funera) prayers on him”. They replied: “But he did not face the *qiblah* during prayer. So the verse was revealed. This is a mu`ďal and gharīb tradition.

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[25] “And wheresoever you are, turn your face towards it”

[26] “And to God belong the east and the west”

[27] “So wherever you turn(yourself or your faces) there is the face of God”

[28] “Invoke me (ask me for anything) I will respond to your (invocation).”

These then are five rc, of which the weakest would be the last one because of its mu`ďal status. Then, the one prior to it would be considered less weak because of its *mursal* status, followed by the one before it because of its weak narrators. The second report is authentic except that he said: “it was revealed for such and such” without clarifying the rc. The first report's chain of transmitters is authentic one, and in it the rc is clearly mentioned. This then makes it dependable.

Another example is what Ibn Mardawaih and Ibn Abī ĥātim report by way of Ibn Isĥāq, Muĥammad b. Abū Muĥammad, who quotes `Ikrimah, or Sa`īd, who quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying: “Umayyah b. Khalaf, Abū Jahl and a group of men of the Quraish came to the Prophet (s) and said: “O Muĥammad, come seek the blessings of our idols, and we will then accept your religion. He longed for their conversion to Islam, and so softened to them. Whereupon, God revealed the verse “wa in kādū la yaftinūnaka `an allathī auĥaynā ilayka. . .”[29] (17:73).

Ibn Mardawaih, by way of `l-Aufī, quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying that Thaqīf said to the Prophet (s): “give respite to us for one year so that the (tribe) he be guided to our gods. When we get hold of that person who have been guided to it, we will safeguard it then we accept Islam. So he intended to give them respite, so the verse was revealed.??? This requires the revelation to have taken place in Medina, whereas the first requires it to have taken place in Mecca. Its chain of transmitters places it in the ĥasan category; and with further corroboration in the work of Abū Shaikh by way of Sa`īd b. Jubayr it gets elevated it to the śaĥīĥ category, and is considered dependable.

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[29] “Verily, they were about to tempt you away from that which We have revealed unto you”

The fourth condition is when the chain of transmitters are equally correct in which case the one transmitted by the narrator who was actually present will be given preference. One example of is the tradition quoted by Bukhārī on the authority of Ibn Mas`ūd who said: “I was walking with the Prophet (s) in Medina–he was doing so reclined on a stick–when he passed by a group of Jews. Some of them said: “Why not ask him! They said: “tell us about the soul”. He stood for a while with his head raised, and I then knew that revelation was coming to him. It came to a stop, and he then said: “qul `l-rūĥ min amr rabbī wa mā ūtītum min `l-`ilm illā qalīl”[30] (17:85).

Tirmidhī quotes a tradition he deemed *saĥīĥ* on the authority of Ibn`Abbās, who said: “The Quraish said to the Jews: “Give us something to ask this man about.  They said: “Ask him about the soul.” They did  so, and God then revealed the verse: “man yashfa` shafā`atan . . .”[31]) This requires its revelation to have occurred in Mecca, but the first report contradicts this. It is given preference because that which Bukhārī narrates is more authentic than others,  and because Ibn Mas`ūd was present at the incident.

The fifth state is for it to be revealed following two rc in the foregoing categories, on condition that the difference not be known, as is the case with the previous verses. So it refers to that??? An example of this is Bukhārī’s report on the authority of `Ikrimah who quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying that in the presence of the Prophet (s) Hilāl b. Ummayyah accused his wife of having an affair with Sharīk b. Saĥmā’. In response the Prophet (s)said : “Produce testimony in support or punishment will be inflicted on your back”. So he said “O Messenger of God! If one of us sees a man with his wife, would he go around seeking testimony!” Whereupon the verse “ wa allathīna yarmūna azwājahum. . . in kāna min `l- śadiqīn” ”[32] (24:6) was revealed.

Bukhārī and Muslim report Sahl b. Sa`d as saying: “ `Uwaimir came to `āsim b. `Adī and said: “Ask the Messenger of God, if one man finds another with his wife, and kills him, should he then be killed, or what? So `āsim asked the Messenger of God, who censured the questioner. `Āsim then informed `Uwaimir and said: “By God, I will personally approach the Messenger of God to ask him” Which he did, and was told: “With regard to your predicaement portions of the

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[30] “And they ask you concerning the *ruĥ* (soul/spirit). Say the spirit is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord”

[31]

[32] “And for those who accuse their wives........................”

Qur'ān have been revealed. . ." These reports have been reconciled by assuming that though this first occurred with Hilāl, it however, happened to coincide with the coming of `Uwaymir as well. It was thus revealed with regard to both of them. Nawawī inclines to this view but is preceded by `l-Khatīb who said: "Perhaps coincidentally, this occurs to both at the same time".

Bazzār quotes Huthaifa as saying that the Messenger of God said to Abū Bakr : "if you see a man with Umm Rūmān (his wife), what would you do to him?". He said: "I will harm him". He then said: "What would you do, O `Umar?" He said: "I will say "God curse the `l-a`jaz (guilty one) because he is filth. The verse was then revealed. Ibn Hajr said: "Nothing proscribes a multiplicity of rc"

The sixth state, is where this is impossible, in which case it will be ascribed to multiple revelations and repetitions. An example would be the tradition quoted by Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Musayyib who said: "The Messenger of God visited Abu Talib whilst he was on his death bed and with him were Abu Jahl and `Abd Allāh b. Abū Umayyah. So he said: "O uncle, say! There is no deity worthy of worship except God, and I will then intercede on your behalf with God". Abu Jahl and `Abd Allāh said: "O Abu Talib! Are you renouncing the religion of `Abd 'l- Muţţallib! They continued speaking to him until he said: "He remains on the religion of `Abd 'l-Muţţalib". The Prophet (s) then said: "I will continue to seek forgiveness for you as long as I'm not prevented from doing so." So the verse : "mā kāna li `l-nabī wa allathīna āmanū an yastaghfirū li `l- mushrikīn . . ."[33] (9:113) was revealed.

Tirmidhī quotes tradition–which he deems *hasan*–with `Alī saying: " I heard a man ask penance for his parents who were idolaters!" I then said: " you ask penance for your parents who were idolaters!", to which he replied: "Abrāhīm also asked penance for his father who was an idolater. So I mentioned this to the Messenger of God, after which the verse was revealed.

Hākim and others quote Ibn Mas`ūd as saying: "The Prophet (s) once went to the graveyard and sat at a grave side, in supplication, for long. He then wept, and said : " the grave that I was sitting at belongs to my mother, for whose supplication I asked my Lord's permission, but He did not do so. The verse "mā kāna li `l-nabī wa allathīna āmanū an yastaghfirū li `l-mushrikīn" was then revealed to me. We reconcile between these traditions as reports of multiple revelations.

Another example also, is the statement of Abū Huraira as quopted by Baihaqī and Bazzār that the Prophet (s) stood at the body of Hamza when he was martyred–and he was mutilated in the process–and he said: “I will most certainly mutilate as many as seventy of them instead!” And whilst he was still standing Gabriel came down with these last verses of `l-Naĥl: “Wa in `āqabtum fa `āqībū bi mithli mā `ūqibtum bihi . . .”[34] (16:126)

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[33] "It is not proper for the Prophet and those who believe to ask God forgiveness for the idolaters . . ."

Tirmidhī and Hākim quote Ubay b. Ka`b as saying” “At the battle of `Uĥud, sixty- four Helpers (*ansār*) and six Migrants (*muhājirūn*) were slain. Amongst them was Hamza who had been mutilated. As a result, the Helpers said: “If we overcome them someday in this manner we will most certainly we will definitely attack them.??? During the conquest of Mecca however God revealed the verse “wa in `āqabtum . . .” Apparently, the revelation of this verse was delayed till the conquest of Mecca. In the previous tradition however, its revelation took place at Uĥud. Ibn ĥaśśār said: “To reconcile these traditions one may aver that because it is considered a Meccan revelation, it was first revealed in Mecca before migration, as part of the chapter, then secondly at Uhūd, and then thirdly, at the conquest of Mecca. These multiple revelations were reminders God sent to His servants. To this genre Ibn Kathīr added the verses pertaining to the soul.

Note

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[34] “And if you punish (your enemy), then punish them with the like of that which you were afflicted”

At times these narrations include the words “then he recited” which the narrator confuses for “then was revealed”. An example of this is the tradition which Tirmidhī reports–and deems *saĥīĥ*–on the authority of Ibn `Abbās authenticated it - who said: “a Jew passed by the Prophet (s) and said: “what will you say O Abū ‘l-Qāsim to God placing the heavens on this, and the earths on this; the water on this, and the mountains on this; and the entire creation on this?” God then revealed the verse “wa mā qadaru Allāh haqq qadrihī. . .”[35] (6:91). The report however, appears in the sahīih collection with the words: “then the Prophet recited. . .” This is correct for the verse is Meccan.

Another example is the Bukhārī’s report which has Anas saying: “On hearing of the arrival of the Messenger of Allah Abd Allāh b. Salām went to him, and said: “I want to ask you of three things, known to none but an apostle: What is the first sign of the Hour? And what is the first food of the people of Heaven? And who does the child resemble, his father or his mother? He said: “Gabriel just informed me.” He said: “Gabriel?”. He said yes”. He said: “that angel is the enemy of the Jews”. So he read this verse “ man kāna `adūwwan li jibrīl fa innahu nazzalahū `alā qalbika”[36] (2:97). Ibn Hajr in the commentary of Bukhārī said: the context indicates that the Prophet (s) simply recited the verse to refute the words of the Jew, which does not necessitate its revelation at that time. He said: “this is most reliable view, for narrations other than those of Ibn Salām are considered authentic in this regard.

Note

Contrary to the previous discussion, where one rc is offered to explain multiple verses it also occurs that multiple verses are revealed in response to a single event. An example of this would be Tirmidhī and Hākim’s report quoting Umm Salamah as saying: “O Messenger of God, I do not hear God mentioning anything about women and the migration!” In God revealed the verse: “fa istajāba lahum rabbuhum annī lā uďī`u . . .”[37] (3:195).

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[35] “They did not estimate God with an estimation due to Him. . .”

[36] “Whoever is an enemy of Gabriel, for indeed he has brought the Qur'ān down to your heart”

[37] “ so their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), never will I allow to be lost the work of any. . .”

Hākim also quotes her as saying: "O Messenger of God, you speak of men, but not of women!" So the verse "inna `l-muslimīna wa `l-muslimāt"[38] (33:35) and the verse " innī lā uďī`u `amala `āmil minkum min thakarin au unthā"(3:195) were revealed. He also quotes her as saying: "Men fight but not women! And we receive no more than half the inheritance! In response God revealed: "wa lā tatamannau mā faďďala Allāh bihī ba`ďukum `alā ba`ď" and " inna `l-muslimīna wa `l-muslimāt".

Another example is Bukhārī's report on the authority of Zaid b. Thābit that the Messenger of God dictated to him: "lā yastawī `l-qā`idūna min `l-mu'minīn. . . wa l-mujāhidūn fī sabīl Allāh"[39] (4:95). Ibn Umm Maktūm who was blind then approached him and said: "O Messenger of God, if only I was able to, I would certainly have done battle In response God revealed: "laisa `alā 'l-ďu`afā'. . ."[40] (9:91). And Ibn Abū Hātim quotes Zaid b. Thābit as also saying: "I used to be the scribe for the Messenger of God, and had just put my pen behind my ear when the call for battle was made. The Prophet was still awaiting revelation when a blind came to him and said: "What about me O Messenger of God, seeing that I am blind! Then the verse "laisa `ala 'l-ďdu`afā'. . ." (Tauba 91)

Another example is the report of Ibn Jarīr quoting Ibn `Abbās as saying: "Whilst seated in the shade of a room the Messenger of God said: "A man will certainly come looking at you with the eyes of the devil.. When a blue man appeared, the Messenger of God called him, and said: "why do you and your companions malign me? The man then left and returned with his companions who swore they said no such thing till he eventually forgave them In response however the verse "yaĥlifūna bi Allāh mā qālū . . ."[41] (9:74) was revealed. Hākim and Ahmad report this but with the words "and God then revealed" "yaum yab`athuhum Allāh jamī`an fa yaĥlifūna kamā yaĥlifūna lakum. . . ."[42] (58:18) at the end.

Note

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[38] "Verily, the muslim men and women"

[39] "Not equal are those of the believers who sit at home, except those who are disabled, and those who strive hard and fight in the cause of God"

[40] "There is no blame on those who are weak ...."

[41] "They swear by God that they said nothing (bad)...................."

[42] " on the day when God will resurrect them altogether, then they will swear to Him like how they swear to you.................."

Ponder over that which I have mentioned in this regard and adhere to it, for I remain unsurpassed in compiling and extracting it after much deliberation over the works of the scholars and their disparate views.

Nasikh and Mansukh

A countless number of scholars have written works on this topic. And these include: Abū `Ubaid ‘l-Qāsim b. Sallām, Abū Dāwūd ‘l-Sijistānī, Abū Ja`far ‘l-Naĥĥās, Ibn ‘l-Anbārī, Makkī, Ibn ‘l-`Arabī, and others. The learned elders have said: “No one is allowed to interpret the Book of God except after he is thoroughly familiar with verses that abrogate or have been abrogated. `Alī once told a judge: “Are you familiar with verses that abrogate or have been abrogated?” The judge replied: “No!” `Alī then said: “You ruin yourself and others!” This section deals with several issues.

First: the word naskh may be used in the following contexts:

To obliterate as in the verse “ . . .but God obliterates that which the devil casts and then establishes His verses. . .”(22:52)

1. To replace, as in the verse: “When We replace one verse with another. ..”(16:101)
2. To change hands, as occurs in matters of succession, where the inheritance changes hands from one person to another.
3. To transcribe from place to place. Thus it is said: “I have transferred the book.” that is, “I have transcribed its words and its text to another location.” Makkī maintains that it is incorrect to include this category in the Qur’ān, and he has strongly criticized ‘l-Naĥĥās for allowing it. He argued that the abrogator in this case, appears not in the words of the abrogated but in words that are different. And ‘l-Sa`īdī has argued that ‘l-Naĥĥās’s assertion is supported by the verse: “We have been recording what you were doing”(45:29); and the verse: “It is indeed, with us, in the Mother of all Books, it is exalted and full of wisdom”(43:4) It is well known that that which appears as a summary in the Qur’ān exists in its entirety in the Well Preserved Tablet, as the Almighty says: “In a Book, well preserved; which none but the pure ones may touch. ”(56:78-79)

Second: abrogation which, for many a sound reason, God has made exclusive to this community.One such reason is to facilitate things. Whilst all Muslims think this is permissible, Jews do not, arguing instead that this portrays God as indecisive, as one who holds one opinion, and then changes it. This however, is baseless because abrogation is no more than a sequence of events like life after death, sickness, after health, poverty after wealth and vice versa. Now, just as none of the foregoing examples can be construed as the results of indecisiveness, so too is the case with acts that are first disallowed and subsequently allowed.

Scholars differ on whether the Qur'ān is abrogated by anything other than the Qur'ān. Some, citing the verse "Those revelations that we abrogate or cause to forget , we replace with something better, or at least equal thereto"(2:106) say: "No! Nothing is equal to or better than the Qur'ān."

Other scholars contend that the sunna, given that it too comes from God, can also abrogate the Qur'ān. God Almighty says: "He speaks not vainly"(53:3) An example of this, one which appears hereunder, is the verse dealing with testaments.

A third view, cited by Ibn Ĥabīb ‘l-Naisāpuri in his exegesis, argues that this is permissible only if such a sunna is itself a revealed command of God, and not the personal judgement of the Prophet (s). ‘l-Shāfi`ī says in this regard: "Whenever the sunna abrogates the Qur'ān there will always be found another verse from the Qur'ān itself in support thereof, and wherever the Qur'ān abrogates the sunna there will always be found another sunna in support thereof. This is to show congruity between the Qur'ān and the sunna. I have dealt extensively with this topic in my commentary on the work on jurisprudence *Manzūmat Jam` ‘l-Jawāmi`*

Third: Abrogation occurs only in verses dealing with commands and prohibitions albeit in the form of an report. But this will not apply if the report is not in the form of a demand. In this category belong verses that promise and threaten. Having said that, it's obvious that the numerous works dealing with abrogation that happen to include the foregoing category of verses have no basis.

Fourth: abrogations comprise of several categories. These include:

1. The abrogation of an order before its implementation as in the verse dealing with secret conversations. This is an actual case of abrogation.
2. Abrogation of laws that applied to earlier communities. This is the case with the verse dealing with retaliation and blood wit. Other examples are of laws that are collectively abrogated such as those that changed the direction of prayer from the Bait ‘l-Maqdis to the Ka`ba, and fasting the first 10 days of the month of Muharram. These however, are abrogations in a manner of speaking only.

3. The abrogation of a law based on a particular circumstance which subsequently disappears. This is the case with the call to patience and forgiveness during times of weakness or numerical disadvantages. This was abrogated when fighting became obligatory. In actual fact, this is not a case of abrogation but a case of “being made to forget”, as God Almighty Himself says in the case of war: “. . .or We cause it to be forgotten”, that is, the duty to do battle, until Muslims become stronger. During times of weakness however, the rule is to forbear in the face of persecution. This then puts paid to the arguments claiming that all such verses have been abrogated by the “verse of the sword”, when in fact, this is not the case. Rather, it belongs to the ‘made to forget’ category, to which belongs every order that is meant to be executed whenever the circumstances so demand, but which gets moved elsewhere when those same circumstances are changed. This is not abrogation, because abrogation effaces a ruling and makes its subsequent application illegal. Makkī thus points out that in the view of some scholars verses such as: “Forgive and overlook till God brings forward His decree.”(2:109) should be considered qualified and not abrogated, because they allude to the deferment of time or purpose. And that which has been deferred to some future time is not abrogated.

Fifth, some scholars have classified the chapters in the Qur’ān with regard to abrogation, in the following categories:

- 43 chapters that contain no verse that abrogates or is abrogated. They are: ‘l-Fātiĥa, Yūsuf, Yāsīn, ‘l-Ĥujarāt, ‘l-Raĥmān, ‘l-Ĥadīd, ‘l-Saff, ‘l-Jumu`a,‘l-Taĥrīm, ‘l-Mulk, ‘l-Ĥāqqa, Nūĥ, ‘l-Jinn, ‘l-Mursalāt, `Amma,‘l-Nāzi`āt, ‘l-Infiţār, and the three thereafter, ‘l-Fajr, and the chapters that follow till the end of the Qur’ān, except for ‘l-`Asr, ‘l-Tīn, and ‘l-Kāfirūn.
- 25 chapters that contain verses that abrogate or have been abrogated. They are: ‘l-Baqara, and the three chapters that follow, ‘l-Ĥajj, ‘l-Nūr, and the two that follow,‘l-Aĥzāb, Sab’, ‘l-Mu’min, Shūrā, ‘l-Dhariyāt, ‘l-Ţūr, ‘l-Wāqi`a, ‘l-Mujādila, ‘l-Muzzammil, ‘l-Muddaththir, Kuwwirat, ‘l-`Asr.
- 6 chapters that contain only verses that abrogate: ‘l-Fatĥ, ‘l-Ĥashr, ‘l-Munāfiqūn, ‘l-

Taghābun, ‘l-Ţalāq, ‘l-A`la. The remaining 40 chapters only contain verses that have been abrogated. This view is objectionable on grounds that will be discussed hereunder.

Sixth, Makkī says that the verses that abrogate may be classified in the following order:

I. An ordinance that abrogates another ordinance, such that it is no longer permissible to act upon the latter. An example is the law prescribing the imprisonment of a fornicator which is abrogated by the ordinance of flogging.

II. An ordinance that abrogates another ordinance such that it is still permissible to act upon the latter. Such as is the case with the verse prescribing the exercise of patience (instead of fighting against the pagans).

III. An ordinance that abrogates an act such as fighting, which at first was optional and later became obligatory.

IV. An optional act that abrogates an ordinance such as the night prayer which was abrogated by the order to recite, in the verse: “Recite of the Qur’ān whatever comes easy”(73:20)

Seventh: Abrogation in the Qur’ān appears in three forms:

a-Verses whose recitation and ordinance is abrogated. The Shaikhān (Buhkārī and Muslim) report that `A’isha said: “Initially 10 separate suckings were required (to establish parentage between the baby and the wet nurse) but this was abrogated (by the verse stipulating) 5 suckings. At the death of the Prophet (s) the verse continued to be recited as part of the Qur’ān.[1] There has been talk about the statement “...continued to be recited..” for apparently, it implies that the verse is still recited, whilst it is not. One explanation is that the abrogation occurred just prior to the death of the Prophet (s). Another, is that at the time the recitation too was abrogated except that this had not quite reached all people until after the death of the Prophet (s). Thus, he died and there were still people around who recited the verse. Abū Mūsā ‘l-Ash`arī said: “It was revealed and later removed.” Makkī said: “This is an example, the only one I know of, where both the verse abrogated and the verse abrogating are not recited”

b-Verses whose ordinances have been abrogated but not their recitations: Much has been written in this category, and people have included herein many verses, even though the actual number of verses are few indeed. The more meticulous scholars such as the judge, Abū Bakr b. ‘l-`Arabī have explained and confirmed this. I maintain that the material that the former group included may be classified as follows:

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[1] Muslim *Saĥīĥ* hadith # 1402

- Verses that are neither abrogated nor qualified, and have no connection to these categories whatsoever. This is true for verses such as: “. . .and spend of that which We gave them”(2:1) and “. . .spend of that which We have given you”(2:254) which some say have been abrogated by the verse that prescribed zakāt. But this is not the case. The first verse in fact is a report showcasing charity which may allude to zakāt, to spending on the family, or to other praiseworthy acts such as hospitality or providing aid. Nothing in the verse seems to point to spending other than zakāt which might be compulsory. The second verse, as indeed some have explained, may allude to the payment of zakāt Some consider the verse: “Is not God the most decisive of all judges.”(95:8) to be abrogated by the “verse of the sword”, but this is not so, because God Almighty is forever the most decisive of judges. This statement cannot support abrogation even though it implies an order to leave matters to God and to forgo retaliation. Some consider the verse “. . .and speak kindly to people”(2:83) abrogated but Ibn Haśśār considered this incorrect, arguing instead that it is an account of the pledge taken from the Children of Israel; it is merely a report and not an abrogation. Now apply the same logic to the other verse as well.
- Verses that qualify rather than abrogate: Ibn `Arabī has performed a superb task in recording such verses, including the following: “Man is indeed at a loss; except those who believe. . .”(103:2-3); “As for the poets, only those in error follow them. Do you see how they stumble in every valley, and how they speak about what they know not--except for those who believe. . .”(2:224-227); “forgive and overlook, till God brings forward His decree”(2:109) These, and other such verse that are qualified by clauses of exception or objective have been wrongly itemized as abrogations. The verse: “Wed not idolatresses until they believe. . .”(2:221) for example, is said to have been abrogated by the verse “. . .and virtuous women of those who received the Book.”(5:5)when in fact it has only been qualified.
- Verses that abrogate those customs and conventions of early Islam that do not appear in

the Qur’ān, Pre-Islamic Arabia, or the laws of the earlier communities. Thus the verse invalidating marriage with step mothers, is one such example, as are the verses prescribing requital or blood money for injuries incurred, and restricting divorce pronouncements to three. The inclusion of such verses in the abrogation category might be appropriate, but as Makkī and others besides him countenance, it is even more appropriate that they be excluded therefrom They explain that if the forgoing verses are included in the abrogation category then the same can be said for the entire Qur’ān, because it lifts most, if not all the practices common to the disbelievers and the people of the Book.. Furthermore, abrogation correctly speaking, only occurs when one verse of the Qur’ān abrogates another.” Yes, it does seem that the third of these categories, the lifting of early Islamic practices makes more sense than the other two. If therefore, we contend that the verse to take up arms does not abrogate the verses of ‘forgiveness and generosity’, then most of the verses that have been lumped into this category will be excluded. Of that which appropriately falls into this category only a small number remain. In a separate work I have discussed this particular topic; hereunder I provide a concise synopsis of these verses.

‘l-Baqara

- The statement of the Almighty “It is prescribed upon you when death comes to one of you. ..”(2:180) is said to abrogated by the verse of succession. or by the tradition: “Hear! There is no testament in favor of an heir!” or as Ibn `Arabī has said, by way of consensus. And according to some the statement of the Almighty “. . .and those who have the ability (but choose not to) must pay a ransom ”(2:184) has been abrogated by the verse: “. . .and whosoever is present, let him fast the month. . .”(2:185) But others hold that it is still binding, because of the implied presence of ‘*la’* in the former verse. The verse “It is permissible for you to cohabit with your wives during the nights of the fast. . .”(2:187) abrogates the verse “ . . .as it was prescribed upon those before you. . .”(2:183) because compliance with the latter verse would require that they comply fully with every regulation that they complied with. This would include the prohibition of eating, and maintaining sexual contact at night. Ibn ‘l-`Arabī reports, this view as well as another which states that the verse was abrogated by the sunna. Ibn Jarīr reports on the authority of `Aţā’ b. Maysara that the verse: “They ask you about the sacred months. . .”(2:217) is abrogated by the verse: and “. . .and wage war, altogether, on the pagans...”(9:36); The verses: “Those of you who die. . .”. . .provisions for a year. . .”(2:240) is abrogated by the verse: “. . .four months and ten days. . .”(2:234) Testamentary distribution has been abrogated by the laws of inheritance, whilst the need to provide accommodation some maintain has been abrogated by the hadīth “there need not be accommodation”, whilst others say that it is still binding. The verse: “. . .and whether you openly declare what is on your minds or conceal it God will bring you to account for it.”(2:284) has been abrogated by “And God burdens not any soul beyond its capacity. . .”(2:286);

Al `Imrān

- Whilst some say that the verse “. . .and be conscious of God to the full extent possible ”(3:102); is abrogated by the verse “. . .and be conscious of God the best you can. . .”(64:16), others maintain that it is still binding. Apart from this verse no other in this chapter can be claimed to have been abrogated.

‘L-Nisā’

- The verse “. . .and give to those you have made the pledge to their due measure. ..”(4:33) is abrogated by “and some of the blood relatives are closer to each other than others, by God’s decree. . .”(8:75) Some say that the verse “.. .and if they attend the distribution. . .”(4:8) has been abrogated whilst others say no: people have simply neglected to apply it. The verse: “as for those women who indulged in promiscuous acts. . .”(4:15) is abrogated by the verse that appears in the chapter ‘l-Nūr.

‘L-Mā’ida

- The verse: “. . .nor the sacred months. . .”(5:2) is abrogated by the injunction permitting battle therein. The verse: “If then, they come to you judge between them or disclaim jurisdiction”(5:42) is abrogated by “Now therefore, judge between them in light of that which God hath revealed. ..”(5:49) The verse “. . .or two others besides you. . .”(5:106) is abrogated by “And let two just persons from among you bear testimony”(65:2)

‘L-Anfāl

- The verse “. . .if there be of you twenty, steadfast. . .”(8:65) has been abrogated by the verse that follows.

‘l-Barā’a

- The verse “Set out, armed lightly or heavily. . . ”(9:41)is abrogated by the following verses that mention the excuses: “There is no blame on the blind. . .”(24:61); “there is no blame on the weak ones. . .”(9:91); and the verse: “Not all believers should go out to fight. . .”(9:122)

‘l-Nūr

- The Almighty’s statement: “An adulterer shall marry only an adulteress. . .”(24:3) is abrogated by the verse: “And marry the single person from among you”(24:32)And some say that the verse: “Let your slaves seek your permission. . .”(24:58) is abrogated while others maintain that people have neglected to apply it.

‘l-Aĥzāb

- The verse: “Unlawful to you are women. . .”(33:52) is abrogated by “We have made lawful for you your wives”(33:33)

‘l-Mujādila

- The statement of the Almighty: “When consulting the Prophet (s). . .”(58:12) is abrogated by the verse that follows.

‘l-Mumtaĥina

- And some say that the verse: “And grant to those whose wives have left the like of what they have spent”(60:11) has been abrogated by the “verse of the sword”. Others say it is abrogated by the verse of ‘the spoils of war’ and others still, maintain that it is still binding.

'l-Muzzammil

- The verse "Keep vigil all night except for a part thereof. . ."(73:2) is said to be abrogated by the end of the chapter, which in turn is abrogated by the five daily prayers.

These twenty one verses, give or take a few, are the ones that have been abrogated; no acceptable claim for the remaining verses' abrogation can be made. This number drops to 19 however if, as is correct, the verse requiring permission to enter and the verse of distribution of inheritance are considered binding. Add to this the view of Ibn `Abbās that the verse: "Wherever you turn there is the countenance of God." is abrogated by: "So turn your face in the direction of Sacred Mosque" and the number goes up to twenty. I have arranged these verses into the following verse form:

People exaggerate the number of abrogations   and add thereto countless verses
this is a tally of them, twenty all told, no more   as penned by scholars, wise and old
the verse of direction, which way to face, and   the need for a testament when death cometh
when not to eat, and cohabit after sleep   and the penalty for not fasting despite ability
the call to fear God as behooves Him, the   ban on fighting disbelievers in the sacred months
the bequest for widows, a year of waiting   and that man is accountable for his thoughts
the verse of oath, detaining fornicators,   rejecting the disbeliever's testimony, and to persevere,
being armed for battle lightly or heavily   Barring from marriage, male and female fornicators
the Chosen One is not restricted in marriage   paying the mahr to those who have come
Approaching the Prophet   Similarly, the one on the Night Prayer
Also, the servant's need for permission   and giving to those present for the distribution

What is the use of maintaining the recitation of a verse that is no longer enforceable?" some ask. To this question there are two answers. Firstly, inasmuch as the Qur'ān is consulted to determine rules and its performance, so too is it recited as God's words filled with rewards for those who simply recite it. Thus the recitation has remained. Secondly, seeing that abrogation in most cases is meant to ease hardship Muslims are reminded, by the retention of such verses, of the many bounties bestowed on them and the hardships that have been removed. As for the abrogation of pre-Islamic practices or the laws of other divine systems, or in early Islam, these are few in number. In the book mentioned earlier I have recorded examples of the various cases of abrogation including: facing towards Jerusalem which was abrogated by the verse of the *qibla*, and the fast of *`āshūrā'* by the fast of Ramadān

Miscellanea

Some scholars have said that in all cases except the following two the abrogating verse appears before the abrogated: these verses are the verse of the waiting period that appears in 'l-Baqara, and the verse: "Unlawful to you are women. . ."(33:52) which was examined previously. Others have added a third: the 'spoils of war' verse in chapter 'l-Ĥashr said to have been abrogated by the verse: "Know that whatever spoils of war you capture. . ."(8:41) Some have added a fourth: "Show clemency. . ."(7:199)that is, by taking only the surplus of their possessions. This is according to those who believe that it has been abrogated by the verse ordaining zakāt. Ibn 'l-`Arabī has said: "All verses in the Qur'ān advocating tolerance, clemency, and the avoidance of war with disbelievers has been abrogated by this 'verse of the sword' This verse: "And when the sacred months have passed fight the pagans. . ."(9:5) which abrogated 114 other verses was itself abrogated by its 2nd half. Reference to this has already been made. He also said: "How unusual a verse "Show clemency " is: whilst its first part ('Show clemency")and last part (and steer clear of the ignorant) are abrogated, its middle (and enjoin the good) is not." He also said: "Also unusual and unique is a verse whose first section is abrogated by its second section. The verse is: "Be concerned with your selves only! He who deviates cannot harm you, if you are steadfast."(5:105) and the reference is to being steadfast in enjoining the good and censuring wrong. This then abrogates the call to be concerned with yourselves.

'l-Sa`īdī has said: "No abrogated verse has remained in force for as long as the verse: "Say! I am not a novelty among Prophets. . ."(46:9) which had remained in force for 16 years until its abrogation by the opening verse of the chapter,'l-Fatĥ, in the year of Hudaibiya

With regard to the verse: “. . .and they feed the indigent because of their love for Him. . .” (76:8) Hibat Allāh b. Salāma ‘l-Darīr maintained that the words ‘. . .and the prisoners of war” which refers to the prisoners from among the pagans, were abrogated. Once, however, when that section was recited to him in the presence of his daughter she remarked: “O! Father! You have erred!” He asked: Why?” She replied: “Muslims are unanimous in their view that a prisoner must be fed and cannot be killed through starvation.” He replied “You are correct.”

Shaidhala in his work ‘l-Burhān said: “It does happen that the verse that abrogates is itself abrogated. An example is the verse: “Unto you is your religion and unto me, my religion.”(109:6) which was abrogated by the verse: “. . .fight the pagans. . .”(9:5). This verse in turn, was abrogated by “. . .until they pay the exemption tax.”(9:29) This however, is questionable for two reasons: firstly, because of what was alluded to previously, and secondly, because the verse: “. . .until they pay the exemption tax”(9:29) qualifies the verse, but does not abrogate it. A more appropriate example however, is the last verse of the chapter, ‘l-Muzzammil, which not only abrogates the beginning of the chapter but is abrogated itself by the verse that ordains the five daily prayers. Also, the verse “Set out, armed lightly or heavily”(9:41) abrogates the verse that ordains restraint, but is abrogated by the verse that sets out the valid excuses for not participating battle.

Abū `Ubaid reports that ‘l-Ĥasan and Abū Maisara said: “No verse of the chapter ‘l-Mā`ida has been abrogated, but this is problematic given the statement of Ibn `Abbās in the work *‘l-Mustadrak* “that the verse: “Judge between them or disclaim jurisdiction”(5:42) is abrogated by the verse “So, judge between them in light of that which God had revealed”(5:49)

Abū `Ubaid and others report from Ibn `Abbas that the first verse to be abrogated in the Qur’ān dealt with the direction of prayer. In his section on abrogations Abū Dāwūd quotes Ibn `Abbās through another source, as saying: “The first verse to be abrogated in the Qurān dealt with the direction of prayer, followed by the first type of fasting.” “In light of this” Makkī concludes “no Meccan verse was abrogated.” But, the fact is that abrogation of several of its verses has occurred, such as the statement of the Almighty: “. . .while the angels sing the praises of their Lord and seek forgiveness for those who believe.”(:7) which is said to be abrogated by “. . .and seek forgiveness for those on earth”(25:5)” I believe that an even better example is the abrogating verse of the night vigil in the chapter ‘l-Muzzammil, by its concluding verse, or the ordainment of the five daily prayers; and there is unanimity that both these events took place in Mecca.

Note

Ibn ‘l-Ĥassār said: “To establish abrogation references must be obtained from the Prophet (s) himself or from some Companion saying “Verse so and so has abrogated verse so and so.” At times it is needed to reconcile a clear conflict in history, to know that is, what came first, and what later.” He said: “in matters pertaining to abrogation it is not permissible to seek recourse in the views of the run of the mill exegetes, or even to such rulings of the jurists, as are not corroborated by textual sources, in cases where there is no clear contradiction. This is because abrogation seeks to overturn a rule established by the Prophet (s) himself or to establish one where previously there was none. The authority for such action must be textual evidence or history, and not rational arguments.

In this regard there are two opposing views: the conservative view argues that even sound āĥād traditions are not acceptable, and the liberal view accepts the rulings of the exegetes and the jurists. The correct view goes against both these views.

c-Verses whose recitations have been abrogated but not their ordinance. Some have asked: “What purpose does the abrogation of the recitation and not the ordinance serve? And would it not have been more rewarding if the recitation of the verse had remained and been in consonance with the ordinance? The author of the work *‘l-Funūn* replied: “This serves to express the speed at which this community complies with a divine command, without seeking definitive sources in the case of an ordinance that may even be presumptive. They hasten to obey as did Abraham when called upon, to slaughter his son, in a dream--and the latter by all accounts, is the weakest form of revelation.” Examples of this genre of abrogation are many.

Abū `Ubaid said: “Ismā`īl b. Ibrāhīm reported to us, from Ayyūb, from Nāfi`, from Ibn `Umar, who said: ‘None of you should say that he has full knowledge of the Qur’ān; how could he know what full knowledge is! So much of the Qur’ān has passed him by! Let him say instead: ‘I have taken of the Qur’ān that which was present.”

He also said: “Ibn Abū Maryam reported to us from Ibn Lahī`a, from Abū ‘l-Aswad, from `Urwa b. ‘l-Zubair, that A’isha said: “During the time of the Prophet (s) two hundred verses of the chapter ‘l-Aĥzāb were recited but when compiling the Qur’ān `Uthmān was only able to collect what now exists.”

He also said: Ismā`īl b. Ja`far reported to us from ‘l-Mubārak b. Fudāla, from `Asim b. Abū ‘l-Nujūd, from Zirr b. Ĥubaish who said: “‘Ubayy b. Ka`b told me: ‘How many verses do you count in the chapter ‘l-Aĥzāb? I said: ‘72 or 73 verses.’ He said: ‘At one time it had as many verses as ‘l-Baqara, including the verse on stoning which we used to recite.’ I said: “What is the verse of stoning?’ He said: ‘If a married man or woman fornicates, stone them without hesitation; a fitting punishment from God. God is Mighty, and all Wise.’

He also said: “`Abd Allāh b.Sāliĥ reported to us, from ‘l-Laith, from Khālid b. Yazīd, from Sa`īd b. Abū Hilāl, from Marwān b. `Uthmān, from Abu Umāma b. Sahl who said that his aunt said: ‘The Prophet (s) recited the verse of stoning to us: ‘A married man or woman should be stoned, without hesitation, for having given in to lust.’

He also said: “Ĥajjāj reported to us from Ibn Juraij that: ‘Ibn Abū Ĥumaid informed me from Ĥumaida b. Abū Yūnus, who said: ‘At the age of 80 my father recited to me, out of the mushaf of `A’isha: “Verily God and His angels send salutations to the Prophet. O! Ye who believe! Send salutations and greetings to him; and to those who pray in the first row.’ This was before `Uthmān altered the Scripture.”

He also said: “`Abd Allāh b. Sāliĥ reported to us, from Hishām b. Sa`d, from Zayd b. Aslam, from `Aţā’ b. Yasār, from Abū Wāqid ‘l-Laithī who said that “The Prophet (s) as a rule would come teach us any revelation he received. One day he came to us and said: ‘God says: ‘We have sent down provisions for the establishment of prayer and the institution of zakāt. The son of Adam however, if given one valley’s worth of wealth, would lust for a second, and if given a second he would lust for a third; nothing would fill his belly (to his satisfaction) except the dust of the grave. But God does forgive all who turn to him.”

‘l-Ĥākim reports in the work *‘l-Mustadrak* , from Ubayy b. Ka`b who said that the Prophet (s) told him: ‘God has ordered me to recite to you the Qur’ān.’ So he recited: “Those who disbelieve from among the people of the Book and the pagans were not. . .” (98:1) The rest of the recitation included: “ If, on asking, the son of Adam was to be given one valley’s worth of wealth he would lust for a second, and if on asking, he was to be given a second he would lust for a third; nothing would fill his belly (to his satisfaction) except the dust of the grave. But God does forgive all who turn to him. True faith with God is that of the *Hanīfiyya*, not that of Judaism or Christianity. And whosoever does any good will not have it denied.”

Abū `Ubaid said: Ĥajjāj informed us, from Ĥammād b. Salama, from `Alī b. Zaid, from Abū Ĥarb b. Abū ‘l-Aswad, that Abū Mūsā ‘l-`Ash`arī said: “A chapter resembling Barā’a was revealed and then removed except for the following verse: ‘God will assist this religion even with a community that is good for nothing, And if the son of Adam possessed two valley’s worth of wealth he would lust for a third; nothing would fill his belly (to his satisfaction) except the dust of the grave. But God does forgive all who turn to him.”

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports that Abū Mūsā ‘l-`Ash`arī said: “We used to recite a chapter that we compared to the *musabbihāt*,[2] but we were made to forget it, except for one verse which I memorized: ‘O! Ye who believe! Speak not of that upon which you act not, lest it be recorded against you, and you be asked about it on the Day of Resurrection.”

Abū `Ubaid said: “Ĥajjāj informed us from Shu`ba, from , ‘l-Ĥakam b. `Utaiba, from `Adiyy b. `Adiyy who said that `Umar said: “We used to recite: “Do not loath your parents for this on your part, is a form of disbelief.” He then turned to Zaid b. Thābit and said: ‘Is this so?’ He replied: ‘Yes’.

He also said: Ibn Abū Maryam informed us, from Nāfi` b. `Umar ‘l-Jumaĥī who said: ‘Ibn Abū Mulaika informed me, from Miswar b. Makhrama who said: ‘`Umar said to `Abd ‘l-Raĥmān b. `Auf: “I have been unable to find a verse revealed to us “Strive now, as you have in the past.’ Do you know of its whereabouts?’ He replied: “It was effaced along with everything else that was effaced from the Qur’ān.

He also said: “Ibn Abū Maryam informed us, from Abū Lahī`a, from Yazīd b. `Amr ‘l-Mu`āfirī , from Abū Sufyān ‘l-Kalā`ī, that Maslama b. Makhlad ‘l-Ansārī one day said to him: “Inform me of the two verses of the Qur’ān that do not form part of the present text. Those present, including Abū ‘l-Kunūd Sa`d b. Mālik, were unable to inform him.. Maslama then said: ‘Those who believe, migrate, and strive in the path of God with their possessions and their lives: Be ye joyful; you are the successful ones. As for those who protected and assisted them, and on their behalf, confronted those people who earned God’s wrath, for them is a gratifying reward about which no soul knows a thing. This is a reward for the way they acted.”

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‘l-Ţabarānī reports in the work ‘l-Kabīr that Ibn `Umar said: “Two men used to recite a chapter taught to them by the Prophet (s). One night they awoke to pray only to find that they were unable to recall even one letter of that chapter. The next morning they went to the Prophet (s) to inform him of what had transpired. He said: ‘It is of those parts o f the Qur’ān that have been abrogated, so ignore it.”

The *sahihain* collection contains a report of Anas pertaining to the well of Ma`ūna group who were murdered and against whose murderers he had invoked the qunūt prayer. Anas said: the following verse was revealed in regard to them, and we continued to recite it until it was lifted: “and inform our people that we have indeed met our Lord; He is pleased with us and we are pleased with Him.”

The *‘l-Mustadrak* contains a report from Hudhaifa where he says: “Of the chapter ‘l-Bara’a you recite but one quarter.”

‘l-Husain b. ‘l-Munadi in his work *‘l-Nāsikh wa ‘l-Mansūkh* said: “of the material that was removed from the Qur’ān but not from memory are the two chapters of the qunūt supplications that are recited in the *witr* prayer; they were named *‘l-Khal`a* and *‘l-Hafd*.

Note

The judge, Abu Bakr reports in the work *‘l-Intisār* that some scholars deny the occurrence of the foregoing category of abrogation because they are based on āhād traditions. It is not permissible, they say, to make definitive pronouncements about the revelation or the abrogation of the Qur’ān based on āhād traditions.

Abu Bakr ‘l-Razi maintains that: “the abrogation of the text as well as the recitation does occur when God makes them forget about it, and through His removal of it from their minds, He commands them to avoid reciting or writing it in the Holy Book. In time it gets relegated to the status of the other heavenly books that He speaks of in the verse: “All of this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā.” (:18-19) Nothing is known of them today. This does not preclude its existence during the life of the Prophet (s), until his death, when it ceases to be recited. Or it may have been recited after his death except that God caused people to forget them and removed it from their consciousness. But it is not permissible for abrogation to take place after the death of the Prophet (s).”

And in the work *‘l-Burhān* he commented on `Umar’s statement vis-a-vis the ‘verse of stoning’, namely: ‘Only the fear that people would say that ‘’Umar has added to the Book’ prevented me from including it in the Book of God”. He` said: “It appears that the inclusion of the verse in the Qur’ān was permissible, and only the people’s objections stopped him. Thus it sometimes happens that something inherently permissible is blocked by extraneous factors. It is the nature of the written word that if it is permissible then it must of necessity be corroborated.

But it has been said in response that if the recitation of the said verse was permissible then `Umar, the people’s objections notwithstanding, would have hastened to include it, because the mere sayings of people is not an acceptable impediment. In any case, this line of thought is problematic to say the least. Perhaps `Umar reasoned that the report was based on no more than an āhād tradition, which was not sufficient to establish the authenticity of the Qur’ān, even if the ordinance may be so established. And it is for this reason that Ibn Zufr refused to count this verse in his work, *‘l-Yanbū`* as material that had been abrogated. He said: “An āĥād tradition is not sufficient to establish the authenticity of any part of the Qur’ān.” He said: “This in fact, is one of those ‘made to forget’ verses and not an abrogation.” He went on to say that “these two have a tendency to be confused, but the difference is that the words of a ‘made to forget’ verse is forgotten, whilst the rule remains.”

But the statement that `Umar reasoned that this was an āĥād tradition is to be rejected because it has been authentically established that he received this directly from the Prophet (s) himself. ‘l-Ĥākim reports by way of Kathīr b. Salt who said: “Zaid b. Thābit and Sa`īd b. ‘l-As who used to record the Qur’ān, came across this verse, and Zaid said: “I heard the Prophet (s) say: ‘‘If a married man or woman fornicates, stone them without hesitation” `Umar then said: “When it was revealed I approached the Prophet (s) and said: Must I write this down?” But he seemed to dislike that. Do you now see why an old unmarried man guilty of fornication is whipped whilst a married young man guilty of fornication is stoned.”

In the work *Sharĥ ‘l-Minhāj* Ibn Ĥajr says: “We learn from this tradition the reason for the abrogation of its recitation: the practice is actually contrary to the literal interpretation of its general meaning.” It occurred to me that the above was done with a view to lessening the burden of reciting and writing in the Qur’ān what is a rather difficult, and severe rule, and a harsh punishment, even though that law still applies. It also points to the virtue of concealing ills of this nature.

‘l-Nasa’ī reports that Marwān b. ‘l-Ĥakam once said to Zaid b. Thābit: “Why don’t you include this verse in the Qur’ān?” He replied: “Have you seen two young married people being stoned! Anyway, we did mention this, and `Umar said: O! Messenger of God! “Allow me to write it?” He said: “You cannot!” By saying “*uktub lī*” he meant ‘allow me to write it’ or ‘empower me to do so’.

Ibn ‘l-Darīs reports a tradition in the work *Fadā’il ‘l-Qur’ān* from Ya`la b. Ĥakīm from Zaid b. Aslam that `Umar addressed the people and said: “Do not have doubts about the rule of stoning for it is the truth. I was tempted to write it into the Qur’ān and consulted Ubayy b. Ka`b who said: “Did you not come to me when I was still studying it with the Prophet (s). You then hit me on the chest and said: “You study the verse of stoning whilst they cohabit with each other like donkeys do.” Ibn Ĥajr said this was an allusion to the fact that the recitation was removed because of controversy.

Note

Ibn ‘l-Ĥassār said: “In light of this it may be asked: “How did abrogation occur without a replacement, when God in fact says: ‘Those revelations that we abrogate or cause to forget , we replace with something better, or at least equal thereto”(2:106) And this material has no substitute! In reply it may be said that everything that presently appears in the Qur’ān and is not abrogated is a replacement for material whose recitation has been abrogated. Everything in the Qur’ān, that we know of, that God abrogated, He replaced by what he taught us, by what has come to us, in word and meaning, through *tawātur* sources.”

The Deflection (*`l-Imālah*), the ‘a’Consonant (*`l-Fatĥ*), and that which is in Between.

A group of Reciters singled out this topic for publication; included among them is Ibn `l-Qāśiĥ, author of the work *Qurrat `l-`Ain fī `l-Fatĥ wa `l-Imālah wa mā bayna `l-lafźain.*

`l-Dānī said: The ‘a’ Consonant and the Declension are two dialects common to the language of those eloquent Arabs in whose dialect the Qur`ān was revealed. The use of the Consonant is the dialect of the people of Hijāz while the Declension is the dialect of the majority of the people of the Najd region, including the Tamīm , the Asad, and the Qais tribes. He said: “The authority for this recitation is the *marfū`* tradition of Huźaifa which states: “recite the Qur’ān in the strains and sounds of the Arabs, and avoid the sounds of sinners, and the People of the two Books”. He said: “Declension without doubt, belongs to the seven modes of recitation, and to the strains and the sounds of the Arabs.” 1

Abū Bakr b. Abū Shaibah said: “Waqī` narrated to us, on the authority of `l-A`mash, from Ibrāhīm, who said: “In their recitations they considered the letters *alif* and *yā* to be similar. He went on to say that by *alif* and *yā* is meant their emphasis (*tafkhīm)* and their declension.

And in the work Tārīkh `l-Qurrā’ he quotes Abū ` Āśim `l-Darīr `l-Kūfī who quotes Muĥammad b. `Abd Allāh, who quotes `Āśim, who quotes Zirr b. `Hubaish as saying: A man once recited the verse *ţā hā* without the kasrah in the presence of `Abd Allāh b. Mas`ūd. `Abd Allāh b. Mas`ūd then recited the verse as *ţī hī* with the *kasrah* on both letters. But the man again recited *ţā hā* without the *kasrah*. So `Abd Allāh b. Mas`ūd again recited *ţī hī* with the *kasrah* on both letters. The man again recited *ţā hā* without the *kasrah*. So `Abd Allāh b. Mas`ūd recited *ţī hī* with the *kasrah* and said: “Thus did the Messenger of God (s) teach me”. Ibn `l-Jazarī said: “this tradition falls into the category of *gharīb* , and we know it only in this form. Its narrators however, are sound, except for Muĥammad b. `Ubaid Allāh, the `Azramī, who is considered weak by the scholars of hadīth. He was however, a pious man who lost his written material and was thus reduced to quoting from memory. He was thus criticised.

I would add: This tradition of his appears in the exegesis of Ibn Mardawaih with the addition “Thus did Gabriel bring it down” at the end.

And in the work *Jamāl `l-Qurrā’* Śafwān b. `Assāl is reported to have heard the

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[1] This particular tradition is used by John Wansbrough in *Quranic Studies: Sources and methods of Critical Interpretation* New York, 2004, p.104, as part of his discussion on the Koran as *lingua sacra*.

Messenger of God (s) recite: *Yā Yaĥye"*. He was then told: "O Messenger of God, you decline even though this is not the dialect of the Quraish?" So he said: "it is however, the dialect of its maternal branch, the Banu Sa`ad."

Ibn Ashtah quotes Abū Ĥātim, as saying: "the Kufans justify declensions by pointing to various places in the Qur'an where the *yā'* appears in place of the *alif*. They reproduced the same written form, and declined so that the *alif* closely resembles the letter *yā*.

`l-Imāla* refers to the act of bending the sound of the *fatĥa* in the direction of the *kasra*, and more often, the *alif* in the direction of the *yā*. This is the pure form of the declension. Less well known names given thereto include *`l-idjā`*, *`l-baṭĥ and *`l-kasr*. It is a sound that falls between two letters which is also called *`l-taqlīl*, *`l-talṭīf*, and *bayna bayn*. It is of two kinds: The Intense (*shadīdah)* and the Intermediate (*mutawassiṭah)* , and they may both be used in recitation. When the Intense form is used then the total declension of the alif to the ya` (qalb) should be avoided; and so too, the excessive lengthening of vowels. The Intermediate sound falls between the 'a' consonant and the intense declension.

`l-Dānī has said: "our scholars differ as to the best and the most superior of these two. I choose the Intermediate declension which is in between. This is because the objective of the declension is achieved thereby; and it serves as an indication that the origin of the *alif* is the *yā*, and brings attention to its occasional change to a *yā* in certain places or to its melding with an adjoining kasra or *yā* .

As for the 'a' consonant, it is formed with the reciter opens his mouth to pronounce a letter. It is also called *`l-tafkhīm*. And it too falls into the category of the Intense and the Intermediate. For the Intense form the reciter will open his mouth widely; but this is not permissible in the case of the Qur'ān—it is in fact, non-existent in the Arabic language. The Intermediate form falls between the Intense 'a' and the Intermediate Declension. `l-Dānī said: "this is the form used by the pro-declension reciters.

Differences exist as to the declension being a branch of the 'a' consonant or to them being independent. Reasons given for the first view are that the Declension is always with cause: If it is absent then the 'a' consonant becomes necessary. But if it does exist, then both the 'a' consonant as well as the declension forms of recitation are permissible. But for every word that is declined, there exists among Arabs a similar word that is recited with the 'a' consonant. The 'a' consonant's frequent usage points to it being the original and to the declension being a branch thereof.

The discussion in regard to the declension assumes five forms: Its causes; forms, its uses, those who apply declension; and that which is declined.

As for its causes, reciters mention ten, which Ibn `l-Jazarī says hinge on two factors: The first is the kasra, and the second, the *yā*. Each of these letters appear either before or after the place of declension. At times it is assumed to exist in the place of declension itself. It might also be that neither the *kasra* nor the *yā* exist in the word, nor are they assumed to be in the place of the declension, but they are posited nonetheless, in some word inflections. At times the *alif* and the *fatĥa* may be declined due to some other *alif* or *fatĥa*., in which case it will be called: A declension because of a declension (*`l-Imāla li ajl li `l-Imāla*). At other times the *alif* is declined to mimic another declined *alif* .

Ibn `l-Jazarī has said: "Declension also occurs because of repetitive usage, and to distinguish between the noun and the particle. This would then bring the causes to twelve.

As for the declension brought about by a preceding *kasra*, it is conditional on there being but a single letter in between, such as the *alif* in *kitāb* and *ĥisāb*. This gap is in respect of the *alif*. As for the declined *fatĥa* there are no gaps between it and the *kasra* - or between two letters in which the first is governed by a *sukūn*, e.g. *insān*, or between two *fatĥas* in which the second letter is the *hā*` because of its obscurity.

As for the preceding *yā* , it is either connected to the *alif* e.g. *`l-ĥayāt* and *`l-ayāmī* , or separated by two letters of which one is the *hā* e.g. yadahā

As for the *kasra* that follows, the same rule would apply whether it is permanent e.g. *`Ābid* or temporary, e.g. *min `l-nās* and *fī `l-nār*. As for the *yā* that comes afterwards, one example would be the word *mabāyi`*. And as for the imputed *kasra* , one example would be the word *khāfa* because originally it was *khawifa*. As for the imputed *yā* e.g. *yakhshā*, *`l-hudā*, *abā* and *`l-tharā*. In all such cases the alif has been changed from a *yā*, and the preceding letter has been given a *fatĥa*.

And the same applies to the *yā'* in words such as *ţāba*, *jā'a* , *shā'a* and *zāda* because the first letter of the root word (*fā*) gets a *kasra* along with the pronoun having a voweled ďamma.

The same applies to the temporary *yā* as in *talā* and *ghazā* because their *alif* has been substituted for the *waw*. It has been declined because of its change to a *ya* as in the words *tuliya* and ghuziya.

As for the declension because of another declension, this is exemplified by `l-Kisā'i's declension of the nūn after the *alif* in the verse *innā li Allāh* because of the Declension of the *alif* in *li Allāh* . He did not however, decline the words *wa innā ilayhā* because of its absence thereafter. Similarly, he has declined *`l-dhuĥā* , *`l-qurā dhuĥāhā* and *talāhā*.

As for the declension because of resemblance, an example thereof is found in the feminine *alif* in `l-ĥusnā and the *alif* of *Mūsā* and *`Īsā;* this because they resemble the *alif* in the word *`l-hudā*.

As for the declension due to repetitive usage, according to the author of the work *'l-Mubhij*, an example thereof is the word *'l-nās* as recited in three places.

As for the declension due to the difference of the noun and particle, example thereof are the opening letters of the various chapters. And as Sībawaih has said: “Included therein are the letters *bā* and *tā* of the alphabet because they are the names of the sounds made thereby, as opposed to particles such as *mā* , *lā* , etc.

As for its methods, these are four, all of which hinge on the foregoing causes. Its bases are two: affinity and intimation. As for Affinity (*`l-munāsabah*) it comprises of a single category which is that which is declined for reasons inherent in the word itself, and which is declined because of some other declension. Their objective was to have the action of the tongue and the adjoining pronunciation of the declined letter to be from the same place and to follow the same form.

As for Intimation (*`l-Ish`ār),* it comprises of three categories: The intimation of the base word, the intimation of the word in some places, and intimation because of resemblance to the base word.

As for its uses, it serves to facilitate pronunciation. This is because the tongue in the consonantal mode is elevated, and through declension is lowered. Lowering is easier on the tongue than elevating. This is why some decline. And those who maintain pronunciation in the ‘a’ mode, do so because the consonant is the base and because it is stronger.

As for those who decline, all ten the reciters belong to this category, except Ibn Kathīr who does not decline a thing in all of the Qur’an. As for what is declined, this is exhaustively discussed in the books of recitals and in those works dedicated to discussing the declension. We mention hereunder some rules:

Ĥamza, `l-Kisā’ī and Khalaf decline every *alif* found in the Qur’an that has been transmuted from a *yā*, be it in a noun or a verb. Examples include: *`l-hudā, `l-hawā, `l-fatā, `l-`amā, `l-.zinā, atā, abā, sa`ā,yakhshā, yaďā, ijtabā, ishtarā, mathwā, ma'wā,adnā* and *azkā.*

They also decline every feminine *alif* on the scales *fu`lā* , *fi`lā* or *fa'lā* such as in the words *ţūbā, bushrā, quśwā, `l-qurbā, `l-unthā, `l-dunyā, iĥdā, thikrā, sīmā ďīzā, moutā,* *marďā, `l-salwā* and *`l-taqwā*. Included herein are the words *Mūsā, Īsā* and *Yaĥyā.*

They also decline words on the scale *fu`ālā* or *fa`ālā* such as *sukārā, kusālā, usārā, yatāmā, naśārā* and *`l-ayāmā.*

And words in the Qur'an that are written with a *yā*, e.g., *balā, matā,yā asafā,yā waylatā, yā ĥasratā, annā* (the interrogative particle). Excluded are the following: *ĥattā, ilā, `alā, lada* and *mā zakā*; these will not be declined at all. Likewise, they decline letters having the *wāw* whose first letter has a *kasra* or a *ďamma* e.g. *ribā* wherever it occurs, *`l-dhuĥā* whatever form it takes. `l-quwā and *`l-`ulā.*

They decline the opening letters of eleven chapters. These take the forms: *ţā hā, wa `l-najm , sa'ala , `l-qiyāmah, wa `l-nāzi`āt, `abasa , `l-a`lā, wa `l-shams, wa `l-lail , wa `l-ďuĥā* and *`l-`alaq.* Abū `Amr and Warsh concur with regard to these chapters.

Abū `Amr declines every word having a *rā* followed by the *alif* , in every scale it appears. Examples include: *thikrā, bushrā, asrā, arāhu, ishtarā, yarā, `l-qurā, `l-naśārā, usārā* and *sukārā.* It conforms with the *alif* on the scale of *fu'lā* wherever it comes.???

Abū `Amr and `l-Kisā'ī decline every word in which an *alif* followed by the letter *rā* appears, whether that happens to be at the ends, or in the genitive form. Examples include: *`l-dār, `l-nār, `l-qahhār, `l-ghaffār, `l-nahār, `l-diyār, `l-kuffār, `l-abkār, bi qinţār, abśāru hum, ouwbārihā, ash`ārihā* and *ĥimārika.* This would be the case whether the *alif* is or is not a root letter.

Ĥamza declines the *alif* of the middle radical of the folowing ten verbs in the perfect tense: *zāda, shā'a , jā'a , khāba , rāna , khāfa , zāgha , ţāba , ďāqa* and *ĥāqa* where and how it occurs.

`l-Kisā'ī declines the *hā* of femininity and the letter before it into an unqualified pause when appearing after fifteen letters which are combined in the acronym *"fajathat Zaynab lathūd shams".* These are: the *fā*, in the words as in *khalīfa* and *ra'fah;* the *jīm* as in *walījah* and *lujjah;* the *thā* as in thalātha and khabīthah; the *tā* , as in *baghtatan* and `l-maytah; the *zā* as in *bārizah* and a`izzah; the *yā* as in 2hashyah and *shabah ;* the *nūn* as in *sunnah* and *jannah;* the *bā* as in *ĥabbah* and `l-taubah ; the *lām as* in *laylah* and *thullah;* the *thāl* as in *laththa* and `l-mauqūthah; the *wāw* as in *qaswah* and *`l-marwah* the *dāl* as in *baldah* and *`iddah ;* the *shin* as in *`l-fāĥishah* and *`īshah ;* the *mīm* as in *raĥmah* and *ni`mah*, the *sin* as in *`l-khāmisa* and *khamsah.*

He maintains the 'a' consonant as is when it appears after the following ten letters: *jā* `a , letters of *`l-isti`lā'* i.e. (*Qaf ţā khā śād dhād ghayn ţā*), the remaining 4 letters i.e. (*Alif kāf* *hā rā)*. If a a *yā* with a sukun appears in front or a *kasra* that is joined or un-joined with a vowel-less letter then too declension will occur. If that is not the case then it will be read as a normal consonant.

There remain some letters that are in dispute or require further explanation. Furthermore there are no rules that govern these letters. They may be found in the works relevant to this field.

And with regard to the opening letter of the various chapters: Ĥamza, `l-Kisā'ī, Khalaf, Abū `Amr, Ibn `Āmir and Abū Bakr decline the verse *Alif lām Rā* in the five chapters. Warsh opts for the recital in between

Abū `Amr, `l-Kisā'ī and Abū Bakr decline the *hā* in the opening words of the chapters *Maryam* and *Ţā Hā*.

Ĥamza and Khalaf decline the opening letters of *Ţā Hā* but not *Maryam*.

Apart from Abū 'Amr those who decline the *alif lām rā*, also decline the *yā* at the beginning of *Maryam* . And the first three in addition to Abū Bakr decline the *yā* at the beginning of *Yāsīn*.

These four also decline the *ţā* of *Ţā Hā* , *ţā sīm mīm* , *ţā sīn* and the *ĥā* of *ĥā mīm* in the seven Hā Mīm chapters. Ibn Thakwān concurs with them in regard to the ĥa.

Conclusion

Some scholars have reservations about the Declension in light of the tradition "the Qur'ān was revealed to be recited with fullness (tafkhīm)". Several responses have been given to this.

1. That whilst the first revelations were so governed, later declensions were absolved of this rule.
2. That it means that the recitals be conducted in the voice of the male. The voice should therefore, not be lowered to that of women.
3. That it means that such verses were meant to express harshness and severity towards pagans. But the author of the work *Jamāl 'l-Qurā'* has said that this explanation is farfetched, because verses meant to express mercy and compassion are also governed by this tradition.
4. That it means that the Qur'an be recited with dignity and reverence. In other words, it should be glorified and revered. He thus encourages this sort of recital in order to glorify and dignify the Qur'ān.
5. That fullness means placing a vowel in the middle of the word. This

would require that disputed words be given a ďamma and a kasra but not the pause (*sukūn*) because the damma and the kasra confer such words with a certain loftiness and richness.

`l-Dānī has said: “Thus was it explained by Ibn `Abbās.” He then said: “Ibn Khāqān narrated to us, as did Aĥmad b. Muĥammad, as did `Alī b. `Abd `l-`Azīz, as did `l-Qāsim that he heard `l-Kisā’ī quote Salmān who quotes ‘l-Zuhrī as saying: “Ibn `Abbās said: “the Qur’ān has been sent down to be recited with heaviness and fullness, as is the case with the word *`l-jumu`ah*, and so on. This he cited as an example of heaviness. He then quoted the tradition of Ĥākim on the authority of Zayd b. Thābit which states: “the Qur’ān was revealed to be recited with fullness.”

Muĥammad b. Muqātil , one of the narrators said: “I heard `Ammār say that the verses “*`uthran au nuthran*”[2] (77:6) and “*`l-śadafayn*”[3] (18:96)must be recited by placing a vowel in the middle.

He said: “This is supported by Abū `Ubaydah’s assertion that the people of `l-Ĥijaz recited everything except the word *`Ashrah* with fullness; the latter they recited with a *sukūn*. The people of the Najd however, omit fullness except the word, *`ashirah* to which they give the sukun.

`l-Dānī said: “this view is preferable as an explanation of the tradition.

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[2] “To cut off all excuses or to warn”.

[3] “He filled the gap between the two mountains”

Rhetorical Devices of the Qur’ān

Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi’ devoted a separate work to this topic, and mentioned therein some one hundred different rhetorical devices. They include:

‘l-Majāz (Tropes), ‘l-Isti`āra (Metaphors), ‘l-Tashbīh (Metonyms), ‘l-Kināya (Allegories), ‘l-Irdāf (Synonyms), ‘l-Tamthīl (Illustrations), ‘l-Ijāz (Brevity), ‘l-Ittisā` (Equivocality), ‘l-Ishāra (Intimation), ‘l-Musāwāt(Equivalence), ‘l-Basţ (Exposition), ‘l-Ighāl (Hyperbole), ‘l-Tatmīm (Effectuation), ‘l-Takmīl (Completion), ‘l-Îĥtirās (Precaution), ‘l-Istiqśā’ (Investigation), ‘l-Tadhyīl (Appendix), ‘l-Ziyādat (amplification) ‘l-Tardīd (Reiteration), ‘l-Takrār (Repetition), ‘l-Tafsīr (Commentary), ‘l-Iďāĥ (Elucidation), Nafyu ‘l-Shay bi Ijābihī (Affirmation by Negation), ‘l-Madhhab ‘l-Kalāmī (Rhetorical Style), ‘l-Qaul ‘l-Mūjib (Formal Expression), ‘l-Munāqaďa (Contradiction), ‘l-Intiqāl (Transition), ‘l-Isjāl (Writing), ‘l-Taslīm (Delivery), ‘l-Tamkīn (Establishment), ‘l-Taushīĥ (Composition), ‘l-Tashīm (Arrangement), Radd ‘l-`Ujz `alā ‘l-Sadr (Reversal of Conditions), Tashābuh ‘l-Aţrāf (Comparable Endings), Luzūm mā lā Yalzimu (Requiring that which is not Required), ‘l-Takhyīr (Choice), ‘l-Tasjī` (Rhymed Prose), ‘l-Tasrī` (Hastening), ‘l-Ihām (Double Entendre), ‘l-Istikhdām (Employment), ‘l-Iltifāt(Sudden Transition), ‘l-Iţţirād (Sequence), ‘l-Insijām (Fluidity), ‘l-Idmāj (Insertion), ‘l-Iftinān (Multi Faceted Speech), ‘l-Iqtidār (Mastery), I’tilāf ‘l-Lafź ma`a ‘l-Lafź (Conformity of Words to Words), I’tilāf ‘l-Lafź ma`a ‘l-Ma`nā (Conformity of Words to Meanings), ‘l-Istidrāk (Emendation), ‘l-Istithnā’ (Exception), Ta’kīd ‘l-Madĥ bimā yushbihu ‘l-Dhamm (Stressing Praise Through Rebuke), ‘l-Takhwīf wa ‘l-Taghāyur (Frightening and Indifference), ‘l-Taqsīm (Arranging), ‘l-Tadbīj (Embellishment), ‘l-Tankīt (Extraction), ‘l-Taďmīn (Ellipses), ‘l-Jinās (Assonance), Jam`u ‘l-Mu’talaf wa ‘l-Mukhtalaf (Combining the Similar and the Dissimilar), Husn ‘l-Nasaq (Symmetry), `Itāb ‘l-Mar’i Nafsahū (Self Criticism), ‘l-`Aks (Inversion), ‘l-`Unwān (Title), ‘l-Farā’id (Rarities), ‘l-Qasam (Oath), ‘l-Mubālagha (Hyperbole), ‘l-Muţābaqa (Antithesis), ‘l-Muqābala (Contrast), ‘l-Muwāraba (Concealment), ‘l-Murāja`a (Recollection), ‘l-Nazāha (Purity), ‘l-Ibdā` (Creative Writing), ‘l-Muqārana (Comparions), Husn ‘l-Ibtidā’ (Stylized Beginnings), Husn ‘l-Khitām (Stylized Endings), Husn ‘l-Takhallus (Stylized Delivery), and ‘l-Istiţrād (Digression).

Rhetorical devices ranging from the Trope all the way to the Elucidation have already been discussed in separate sections. Some others, such as , the Intimation(*‘l-ta`rīd),* the

Interwoven (*ʹl-iĥtibāk),* the Contentment *(ʹl-Iktifāʹ),* the Multi Faceted Examination*(ʹl-Tard wa ʹl-`Aks*) have been discussed together with the sections on Brevity and Prolixity.

Then there is Negation through Affirmation (*Nafy ʹl-Shay bi Ijābihī*), which was examined in the section prior to the one above. Rhetorical Style (*ʹl-Madhhab ʹl-Kalāmī*) and five other devices which follow were examined in the section on Argumentation, along with some additional sections. Establishment (*ʹl-Tamkīn*)and the eight section thereafter will be examined together with the Endings. Stylized Delivery (*ĥusn ʹl-takhallus*) and Digression(*ʹl-Istiţrād*), will be examined in the section on Correlations. And Stylized Beginnings (*ĥusn ʹl-Ibtidāʹ*) and Stylized Endings(*Barā`at ʹl-Khitām)* will appear in the sections on Openings and Closings.

Hereunder, I present the remainder, together with rare supplementary information not found together, in a single work, other than the one at hand.

Deception or Double Entendre (*ʹL-Īhām)*

The Deception or Double Entendre (*ʹl-tauriyat*) is to use a word with two meanings concurrently, or in tandem with each. Such meanings are either literal or metaphorical, with one being immediate and the other, more distant to comprehension; that it is the latter meaning which is intended is implied by the former, more immediate meaning. Because of this, the listener too, harbors doubts, from the very outset.

Zamakhsharī has said that no section in Rhetoric is more subtle, and more refined than the double entendre, and none more useful and helpful in conveying the meaning of the allegorical speech of God and His Messenger. He said: "One example is the word *istiwāʹ* in the verse: "'l-Raĥmān 'alā 'l-`arsh istawā"[1](20:5) which may mean being fixed to a given place. This, the more direct meaning, is implied, but not intended, because the Almighty is absolved of all such attributes. The word may also mean that He controls, and possesses. This, the more remote meaning is in fact intended here, despite being more remote, and obscured by the more direct meaning." This form of the *tauriyat*, is called simple, because the means of correlating and the source of the correlation are not mentioned.

Another form of the *Tauriyat* is known as the Signified (*murashshaĥa*) and herein some intrinsic quality of one or the other correlates is mentioned. Thus, in the verse: "wa 'l-samā'a banaināhā bi ayd"[2](51:47) the word *ayd* may allude to the limbs. In this case the latter would be the means of correlating. One of its intrinsic qualities is alluded to through mention of the act of construction. But the word also alludes to omnipotence and power, which is what is intended here.

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[1] "The Beneficent is seated on the Throne"

Another example, furnished by Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` in his work *‘l-I`jāz* shows that the word *‘l-ďalāl* in the verse: “qālū ta Allahi innaka lafī dalālika ‘l-qadīm” [3](12:95) implies being blinded by love, and being misguided. The Children of Jacob are then used in antithesis to guidance as a double entendre for love.

And in the verse: “fa ‘l-yaum nunajjīka bi badanika”[4](10:92) the word *badan*, when interpreted as “coat of mail”, would also refer to the human body. Here, it is the more remote, human body, which is intended.

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[2] “The Heavens we built with Our Hands.”

[3] “They said: “By God! You remain lost in the madness of your old age.”

[4] “And on this day We shall deliver your corpse.”

He said: “Another example is the verse which appears after: “wa la’in ‘ātaita alladhīna ‘ūtu ‘l-kitāb bi kulli āyat mā tabi`ū qiblataka; wa mā anta bi tābi’in qiblatahum”[5] (2:145) In the latter reference is made to the Jews and Christians from among the People of the Book. Moses was addressed from the westerly direction which then became the prayer direction for Jews; for Christians it was the east, and for Muslims it was in the middle, in between these two directions. But this does not mean that the word *wasaţ* in the verse: “wa kadhālika ja`alnākum ummat wasaţan”[6](2:143) means middle. It actually means best. On face value however, it may mean middle, especially in light of the prayer direction for Muslims. Both these interpretations are plausible because the word *wasaţ* carries both these meanings. But it is the more distant meaning, best, which is intended here. Thus this verse also exemplifies the double entendre. I maintain however that it exemplifies the murashshaĥa form because of its accompaniment, the verse: “li takūnū shuhadā’a `ala ‘l-nās”[7](2:143) It is their fairness–which is the source of the correlation–that qualifies them to bear witness. The examples prior to this verse belong to the category of the simple double entendre.

Another example is the verse: “wa ‘l-najm wa ‘l-shajar yasjudān”[8](55:6)The word *najm* applies to the stars–as is signified by its correlates, the sun and the moon– and to herbs as well. It is this more distant meaning which is the intent of the verse.

And from the writings of the Shaikh ‘l-Islām Ibn Hajar I have recorded that the following statement of the Almighty in the Qur’ān is a double entendre: “wa mā arsalnāka illā kāffatan li ‘l-nās”[9](34:28) The word *kāffat* means preventer, and thus one who prevents them from disbelief and iniquity. The letter *hā’* serves to emphasize. This meaning is far removed, whereas the more direct meaning is inclusion. But applying the latter is proscribed by the fact that the emphasis appears after its object. And just as one may not say: *ra’aitu jamī`an ‘l-nās* one may similarly, not say *ra’aitu kāffat ’l-nās*.

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[5] “Even if you were to furnish the People of the Book with all the signs, they would not follow your directions; nor are you to follow their directions.”

[6] “Thus have We made you a middle most community.”

[7] “To serve as witness for mankind.”

[8] The star and the trees both prostrate.”

[9] “And We have not sent you except to all of mankind. . .”

Service (*’L-Istikhdām*)

The *tauriyat* and the *istikhdām* together, are considered the most eminent forms of good style. Some have in fact preferred the latter over the former. They have defined it in two ways: Firstly, as interpreted by Sakākī and his followers. it is to use a word having multiple meanings in one sense, and to then use its pronoun in another sense. Secondly, it is to use a word having combined meanings, and to then use two other words, each having one of the former's combined meanings. This is the interpretation of Badr ‘l-Dīn b. Mālik which appears in the work *’l-Miśbāĥ* and is confirmed by Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi`. He exemplifies this through the verse: “li kulli ‘ajal kitāb”[10] (13:38) Here the term *kitāb* means both a preordained term as well as the written word. Now the term *ajal* serves the first meaning and the term *yamĥū* serves the second meaning. Another scholar used the verse: “lā taqrabū ‘l-śalāt wa antum sukārā”[11](4:43) where the term *śalāt* refers to both the act as well as to the place of its performance. Whilst the verse: “ĥattā ta`lamū mā taqūlūn”[12](16:1) elucidates the first meaning, the verse: “illā `ābirī sabīilin”[13](4:43) elucidates the second. It is said that in no place in the Qur’ān does Sakākī’s definition appear. I must say however, that after some thought, I was able to isolate some verses that fit his definition, including the verse: “atā amr Allāh” [14](16:1) The words *amr Allāh* refers to the Last Hour, to its punishment, and to the ministry of the Apostle (s). This last mentioned may be implied. Ibn Mardawaih reports on the authority of ‘l-Daĥĥāk, that Ibn `Abbās said: “atā amr Allāh” refers to Muĥammad. But a pronoun substituting for the same noun in the verse *fa lā tasta`jilūhu”* refers instead to the Last Hour and its punishment. A more graphic example is the word *insān* in the verse: “wa laqad khalaqnā ‘l-insān min sulālat min ţīn” which refers to Adam. But the pronoun in “Thumma ja`alnāhu nuţfat fī qarār makīn”[15](23:12,13) refers to his son.

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[10] “And for every matter there is an ordainment.”

[11] “And approach not the daily prayer whilst intoxicated.”

[12] “. . .until you are aware of what you say.”

[13] “. . .except when passing through.”

[14] “God’s decree is sure to pass.”

[15] “We have indeed, created man from extract of clay, and then We kept him firmly

Another example is the verse: lā tas’alū `an ashyā’a in tubda lakum tasu’kum” followed by “Qad sa’alahā qaum min qablikum”[16](5:101,102) This last must refer to other things because the previous people had not asked the very same questions that the Companions had asked. But they too were forbidden to ask.

Sudden Transition (‘L-Iltifāt)

This is to transmit one form of speech as some other. I mean thereby the shift in form when expressing something in the first person to the second or the third, and so on. This is a popular definition. ‘l-Sakākī has said: “It is either that, or it is to use one form in cases where convention requires the use of some other. It has many uses, of which one is to freshen the discourse, and to spare the listener annoyance and boredom. This is required given the heart’s love of variety, and the monotony and boredom of repetition. These then, are its general benefits. Each context however, is unique in some regards and, as we will explain, each has its own peculiarities based on its location.

One example is the transition from the first to the second person, which serves to stimulate the listener, and grab his attention. It is as if the speaker has turned his attention to him, and given him special consideration by so doing. For example, the verse: “wa mā liya lā a`budu alladhī faţaranī wa ilaihi turja`ūn”(36:22) would conventionally have been: *wa ilaihi arji`u*. But the shift from the first to the second person serves to shift the discourse itself from the speaker reproaching himself, to him reproaching his people. But this is done with a certain kindness and compassion that convinces them that their well being is as important to him as his very own. This shift also makes him the instrument through which fear is put in them, and they are invited to God Almighty.

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ensconced in the form of a fertilized ovum.

[16] “Ask not of things which when divulged to you may prove harmful to you. . .a people prior to you had asked about it. . .”

For these reasons they included this verse into the category of *iltifāt*. But this is debatable, because one requirement for such an inclusion is that information about himself be part of both verses, which is not the case here. After all, it may well be that in using *turja`ūn* he means the addressees and not himself. But in response it may be said that if this was the case then using the negative interrogative in the verse would have been incorrect, for the servant's return to his master is not contingent on others, besides this returning servant, worshiping Him. The meaning therefore is: "How can I not worship one unto whom is my return! The shift from *wa ilaihi arji`a* to *wa ilaihi turja`ūn* takes place because he is part of them. Another useful purpose is to notify them that like them he too is compelled to worship the One unto whom is their return. Another example is: "wa 'umirnā li nuslima li rabb 'l-ālamīn"[17](6:71) and "wa an 'aqīmū 'l-śalāt"[18] (6:72)

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[17] "And we've been ordered to surrender to the Lord of all the worlds."

[18] "And to establish daily prayer."

An example of the transition from the first to the third person is the verse: “innā fataĥnā laka fatĥan mubīnan; li yaghfira laka Allāh”[19](48:1,2) which, conventionally, would have read: *li naghfira laka*. The point here is to explain to the listener that this is the speaker’s style and that he is the target, in person or second hand. The language, furthermore, is devoid of all such embellishments and pretensions which appear in one’s presence, but disappear in one’s absence. Another example is the verse: “innā a`ţaināka ‘l-kauthar; fa śalli li rabbika ”[20](108:71) which conventionally, would have read: *lanā*. Another example is the verse: “amran min `indinā innā kunnā mursalīn; raĥmat min rabbika”[21](44:5) which would have read: *minnā*. Or the verse: “innī rasūl Allāh ilaikum jamī`an. . . fa āminū bi Allāh wa rasūlihī”[22](7:158) which would have read: *wa bī*. This shift occurred for two reasons: firstly, to reject any accusations of bigotry on his part, and secondly, as a warning to them that it is legitimate to follow him in light of the attributes and peculiarities just recited.

The transition from the second to the first person occurs in the verse “fa iqďi mā anta qāďin”[23] followed by: “Innā āmannā bi rabbinā”[24](20:72,73) This example is inappropriate because *iltifāt* requires that its object be singular.

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[19] “For you have We laid open a clear cut victory; so that God may forgive you.”

[20] “We have indeed, given you plenitude; now therefore pray to your lord.”

[21] “A command from Us; We are the ones who dispatch messengers; as a mercy from your Lord.”

[22] “I am the Messenger of God, sent to you, collectively. . .so believe therefore, in God and His Messenger.”

[23] “So decree whatever it is you would want to decree.”

[24] “We do believe in our Lord.”

The transition from the second to the third person occurs in the verse: "ĥattā idhā kuntum fī 'l-fulk wa jaraina bihim"[25](10:22) which, conventionally, would have read *bikum*. The shift from the second person, and the imputing of their condition to others occurs in order to show amazement at their disbelief and their behavior. If he continued to speak in the second person then this benefit would have been lost. Another view is that in light of the verse: "huwa alladhī yusayyirukum fi 'l-barr wa 'l-baĥr"[26](10:22) those addressed in the first place were believing, as well as disbelieving, men. If therefore, the words *wa jaraina bikum* were used then all such men would have suffered rebuke. It thus shifts from the general statement to the specific, from the first part of the verse, that is, to the last, in order to restrict such attributes specifically to those who appear at the end of the verse.

I must say that I have seen some of the pious ancestors follow the opposite perspective, which is to consider the first part of the discourse specific and the last part general. In this respect Ibn Abū Hātim reports `Abd 'l-Raĥmān b. Zaid b. Aslam as saying that the verse: "ĥattā idhā kuntum fī 'l-fulk wa jaraina bihim"[27](10:22) first speaks about them, then about others besides them. It does not say *wa jaraina bikum* because the intent was to bring them together with the others and to set sail with them and with creatures. These are his words. How splendid was the ability of the pious ancestors to seize upon such subtle interpretations to which their successors had devoted their entire lives, and enormous amounts of time, and still missed the point.

Another more mystical explanation is that they were indeed, mentally present when setting sail, and were therefore, addressed as such. The fear of being devastated and of being overcome by the winds is what forced them to focus mentally on the journey. But when the winds blew in harmony with the sailing ships, and when they felt safe, that mental presence disappeared. It is quite common for people to become unmindful of God when feeling safe. Thus when they became unmindful as well, God addressed them in the third person.

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[25] ". . .when you are in the ship and they set off with them."

[26] "He it is who moves you about on the sea and on land."

[27] When you were in the ship, and they sail with them."

Other examples are: “wa mā ātaitum min zakāt turīdūna wajh Allāh fa ‘ulā’ika hum ‘l-muď`ifūn”[28](30:39);  “wa karraha ilaikum ‘l-kufr wa ‘l-fusūq wa ‘l-`iśyān; ‘ulāika hum ‘l-rāshidūn”[29](49:7). The verse: “udkhulū ‘l-jannat antum wa azwājukum tuĥbarūn; yuţāfu `alaihim”[30] would have read *alaihim* But in the verse that follows: “Wa antum fīhā khālidūn”[31](43:70) this transition is reversed.

An example of the transition from the third to the first person is the verse: “Allāh alladhī yursil ‘l-riyāĥ fa tuthīru saĥāban fa suqnāhu”[32](55:48) and the verse: “wa auĥā fī kull samā’ amrahā wa zayyannā. . .”[33](41:12) The verse: “subĥān alladhī asrā bi `abdihī” until “. . . bāraknā ĥaulahū li nuriyahū min āyātinā”[34] shifts from the third to the first person, and then back to the first person, with the words: “Innahū huwa ‘l-samī’ ‘l-baśīr”[35](103:1) Hassan’s recitation indicates further shifts: *liyuriyahu* in the third person, indicates a second shift from *bāraknā*, *āyātinā* indicates a third shift, and *innahū* a fourth. Zamakhsharī said: “In such verses the object is to stress that He alone is omnipotent, and not controlled by any other force.”

The following verses exemplify transitions from the third to the second person: “wa qālū ittakhadha ‘l-raĥmān waladan laqad ji’tum shay’an iddan”[36](19:89); “a lam yarau kam ahlaknā min qablihim min qarn makkannāhum fi ‘l-arď mā lam numakkin lakum”[37](6:6); “wa saqāhum rabbuhum sharāban ţahūran; inna hādha kāna lakum jazā’an”[38](76:21,22); and “in arāda ‘l-nabiyyu an yastankiĥahā; khālisatan laka”[39](33:50)

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[28] “And whatever you give in the form of Zakāt, seeking thereby only the countenance of God, such people’s rewards will be multiplied.”

[29] “And has made hateful to you disbelief, iniquity and sinfulness; they indeed, are the successful ones.”

[30] “Enter Paradise, you and your spouses, in happiness; passed out to them. . .”

[31] “And you will reside therein forever.”

[32] “It is God who dispatches the winds which raise clouds; and we drive them. . .”

[33] “And He revealed its destiny in every sky; and We embellished. . .”

[34] “Glory be to Him who took His servant. . . .We blessed its surroundings to show him our signs.

[35] “He is indeed, all hearing, all seeing.”

[36] “And they say that the Beneficent has taken a son; you have indeed come up with something heinous.”

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[37] “Do they not look upon the multitudes of people before them they We destroyed; We settled them on earth in a manner that not even you We settled.”

[38] “And their Lord will sustain them with a drink, most pure; This indeed, for you is a reward.”

[39] “If the Apostle decides to marry her; solely for you. . .”

And to this distinctive collection belongs the Opening Chapter. The servant who remembers God Almighty alone, and those Divine qualities which fill him with irrepressible urges to turn to Him, qualities such as those in the verse: “māliki yaum ‘l-dīn”[40](1:3) which proclaim His total mastery on the Day of Requital, is then overwhelmed by an uncontrollable desire to address the possessor of such attributes and to seek His help exclusively, in all matters of great concern to him.

It is also said that usage of the third person with *ĥamd* and the second with *`ibāda* implies that extolling is less meritorious than worshiping. One's equals after all, may be extolled, but not worshiped. To therefore, show reverence befitting the lofty status of the addressee, words which imply praise were used in the third person and words which imply worship in the second.

Similarly, the verse “alladhīna an`amta `alaihim” at the end of the chapter explicitly identifies the Bestower and ascribes this bestowal to Him. Which is why it does not say: *ŝirāt ‘l-mun`im `alaihim*. But the words pertaining to wrath avoid direct reference to Him, and are not ascribed to Him. They make no reference to the bearer of this anger, and thus, say not: *ghair alladhīna ghaďabta `alaihim* . And this is to avoid ascribing anger to Him whilst addressing him.

Extolling the Real One and attributing powerful qualities such as Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, and Master of the Day of Judgement to Him, serves to link knowledge with the act of knowing someone possessing such a lofty personality. He, to the exclusion of all others, is alone worthy of worship and supplication. He is addressed thus to distinguish Him with attributes that magnify His loftiness. It is tantamount to saying: “You alone, You who possess these attributes, do we single out for worship, and ask of. None other!

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[40] “Master of the Day of Judgement”

Another noteworthy point mentioned is that His creatures, in the beginning, are at a distance from the Glorified, the Almighty, unable to be in His presence, and to address Him, shut out by the veil of His Glory, that which separates them from Him. When however, they become aware of Him, and grow closer to Him by extolling Him, and confirming praises for Him, and worship Him as befits Him, they qualify to address and beseech Him. This is when they say: "iyyāka na`bud wa iyyāka nasta`īn"[41](1:5)

Notes:

1. That the pronoun of the object towards which there is a shift also refer to the objects from which such a shift had taken place is one prerequisite of the transition. If this is not maintained then constructions such *anta ṡadīqī* would also be considered sudden transitions.
2. And as explained by the author of the work *'l-Kashshāf* and others, also conditional to the Transition is that it occur over two sentences. If this is not maintained then the statement would be deemed 'peculiar".
3. Tanūkhī in the work *'l-Aqṡā 'l-Qarīb* , as well as Ibn Athīr and others have spoken of a rare form of the sudden transition, where, after addressing the subject of a verb or using it in the first person, the verb is then rendered passive. This is the case with the verb *an`amta* in the verse: "ghair 'l-maghdūb `alaihim" (1:5) which, conventionally, would have read: *ghair alladhina ghadabta `alaihim."* The author of the work *`Arūs 'l-Afrāĥ* has suspended judgement on this issue.'
4. Ibn Abū 'l-Iṡbi` has said: "One form of the sudden transition which appears in the Qur'ān, is rare enough for me not to have encountered it anywhere in poetry. It is when the speaker presents two related ideas in sequence, by first presenting the first idea, and then shifting midstream, to the second, only to return eventually, to the first. An example is the verse: "inna 'l-insān li rabbihī lakanūd; wa innahū `alā dhālika la shahīd"[42] (100:6,7) where the discussion shifts midstream from man to his Lord, Almighty, and then, through

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[41] "Thee alone, do we worship, and Thee alone do we beseech."

[42] "Man is indeed, ungrateful to his Sustainer; and He is indeed, witness to that."

the verse: “wa innahū li ĥubb ‘l-khair la shadīd”[43](100:8) it shifts again, from his Lord Almighty, to man. He said: “This genre may appropriately be called the sudden transition of the pronouns.”

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[43] “And he is indeed, passionate in his love for the good.”

5. Tanūkhī and Ibn ‘l-Athīr suggest that transitions from the singular, the dual or the plural to some other form closely resemble the sudden transition. There are six such types. The verse: “qālū ‘a ji’tanā li talfitanā `ammā wajadnā `alaih ābā’anā wa takūnu lakumā ‘l-kibriyā’ fī ‘l-arď”(10:78) exemplifies the transition from the singular to the dual. The verse: “yā ayyuhā ‘l-nabiyy idhā ţallaqtum ‘l-nisā’[44](65:1) exemplifies the shift to the plural. The two verses that follow exemplify shifts to the dual: “fa man rabbukumā yā Mūsā”[45](20:49) and “fa lā yukhrijannakumā min ‘l-jannat fa tashqā”[46](20:117). The verse: “wa auĥainā ilā Mūsā wa akhīhi an tabawwa’a li qaumikumā bi misr buyūtan wa ij`alū buyūtakum qiblat”[47](10:87) exemplifies the shift to the plural. And the verse: “wa aqīmu ‘l-śalāt wa bashshir ‘l-mu’minīn”[48](10:87) exemplifies the shift from the plural to the singular. The following verse exemplifies a shift from the plural to the dual: “yā ma`shar ‘l-jinn wa ‘l-ins in istaţa’tum. . .fa bi ‘ayyi ālā’i rabbikumā tukadhdhibān”[49](55:33,34) Similar to this is the transition from the past, the present, or the imperative tense to some other. Examples of the transition from the past to the present are: “wa Allāh alladhī arsala ‘l-riyāĥ fa tuthīr”[50](35:9); “kharra min ‘l-samā’ fa takhţafuhū ‘l-ţair” [51](22:31); and “inna alladhīna kafarū wa yaśuddūna `an sabīl Allāh”[52](22:25) Examples of shifts to the

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[44] “O! Apostle of God! When you all divorce women. . .”

[45] “And who is your (2) lord, O MOses!”

[46] “Let him then not evict you from Heaven, for you will then be remorseful.”

[47] “And We inspired Moses and his brother to set aside some houses in Egypt, and (tell them): to turn their houses into places of worship.”

[48] “And (let all) establish prayer, and give glad tidings to the beleivers.”

[49] ‘O Assembly of Jinn and Man! if you are able to . . .SO which of the favors of your Lord will you (2) deny?”

[50] “. . .He sent the winds and they stir. . .”

[51] “Hurtling down the skies, when suddenly, birds take off with him.”

[52] Indeed, those who disbelieve, and obstruct from the path of God. . .”

imperative are: “qul amara rabbī bi ‘l-qisţ wa aqīmū wujūhakum”[53](7:29)and “wa ‘uĥillat lakum ‘l-an`ām illā mā yutlā `alaikum fa ijtanibū”(22:30) Shifts from the present to the past also closely resemble the sudden transition. The verses that follow exemplify the shift from the past to the present: “wa yaum yunfakhu fī ‘l-śūr fa fazi’a”[54](27:87) and: “wa yaum nusayyir ‘l-jibāl wa tarā ‘l-ard bārizat wa ĥasharnāhum”[55](18:47) And the verse: “qāla innī ‘ushhidu Allāh wa ishhadū annī barī’”[56](11:54) exemplifies the shift from the present to the imperative. The two verses that follow: “wa ittakhidhū min maqām Ibrāhīm muśallā; wa `ahidnā. . .”[57](2:125) and: “wa an ‘aqīmū ‘l-śalāt wa ittaqūhu wa huwa alladhī ilaihi tuĥsharūn”[58](3:72) exemplify shifts from the imperative to the past and the present respectively.

Sequence (*‘l-Iţţirād*)

Here the speaker names the ancestry of the person being extolled in the order of their births. Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “And examples of this genre in the Qur’ān include the Almighty quoting Joseph as saying: “wa ittaba`tu millat ābā’ī Ibrāhīm wa isĥāq wa ya`qūb”[59](12:38) He said: “He does not mention them in the conventional manner in which the father is first mentioned, then the grandfather, and then the great grandfather. The point here is not simply to mention ancestry, but rather to identify the people that followed them. He thus begins with the founder of the community, and then with the one who first followed him, in that order. The same applies to the following statement of Jacob’s progeny: “na`budu ilāhaka wa ilāha ābā’ika Ibrāhīm wa Ismā`īl wa Isĥāq”[60] (2:132)

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[53] “Say my Lord enjoined the doing of what is right; and so put your face. . .”

[54] “And on the Day when the horn will be blown and struck. . .”

[55] “And on the Day We shall cause the mountains to disappear, and you shall see the land bare and We have resurrected them. . .”

[56] “He said: “I call God to witness, and you too bear witness that I am guiltless of. . .”

[57] “And take the place of Abraham where Abraham stood as a prayer spot; and We ordered. . .”

[58] “. . .and to establish prayer and fear Him; and it is unto Him that you will be gathered.”

[59] “And I have pursued the path of my fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”

Fluidity (Insijām)

This is where language is so free of blockage that it flows like fast flowing water. And because of its fluid construction and sweet language it seems to flow graciously. All of the Qur’ān is like that. The scholars of good style (*`ilm 'l-badī`*) have said: “In some forms of prose where such fluidity is particularly strong the text is almost instinctively balanced; and this is all due to its fluidity.” And of this genre are the verses of the Qur’ān which appear in measured forms, such as the examples which follow:

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[60] “We worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac.”

I. The long meter (baĥr ‘l-ţawīl) “fa man shā’a falyu’min wa man shā’a fal yakfur”[61](18:29)

II. The extended meter (‘l-madīd): “wa iśna`i ‘l-fulka bi a’yuninā”[62](11:37)

III. The outstretched meter (‘l-basīţ): “fa aśbaĥū lā yurā illā masākinuhum”[63](46:25)

IV. The abundant meter (‘l-wāfir): “wa yukhzihim wa yanśurkum `alaihim wa yashfi śudūr qaumin mu’minīn”[64](9:14)

V. The perfect meter (‘l-kāmil):“wa Allāh yahdī man yashā’u ilā śirāt mustaqīm”[65](2:213)

VI. The trilling meter (‘l-hazaj): “fa ‘alqūhu `alā wajhi ‘abī ya’ti baśīran”[66](12:93)

VII. The trembling meter (‘l-rajaz): “wa dāniyat `alaihim źilāluhā wa dhullilat quţūfuhā tadhlīlan” [67](76:14)

VIII. The running meter (‘l-ramal):“wa jifān ka ‘l-jawāb wa qudūr rāsiyāt”[68](34:13)

IX. The swift meter (‘l-sarī`):“au ka alladhī marra `alā qaryat”[69](2:259)

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[61] “So let him who wants to believe in it, and let him who wants to, disbelieve in it.”

[62] ‘Now, construct the ship under our supervision”

[63] “And they became such that nothing of them could be seen except their homes.”

[64] “He will. . .disgrace them, will aid you against them, and He will comfort the bosoms of the community of Believers.”

[65] “And God does guide whosoever He wishes to the Straight Path.”

[66] “And so throw it on my father’s face and he will be able to see.”

[67] “And its shade will be brought close to them, and its bunches of fruit will bow humbly.”

[68] “. . .and statues, and great utensils as watering containers.”

[69] “Or like the one who passed by the town”

X. The flowing meter (‘l-munsariĥ): “innā khalaqnā ‘l-insān min nuţfat”[70](76:2)

XI. The nimble meter (‘l-khafīf): “lā yakādūna yafqahūna ĥadīthan”[71](4:78)

XII. The imperfect meter (‘l-mudāri`): “yauma ‘l-tanād; yauma tuwallūn mudbirīn”[72](40:32,33)

XIII. The abbreviated meter (‘l-muqtadab): “fī qulūbihim maraď”[73](2:10)

XIV. The amputated meter (‘l-mujtath): “nabbi’ `ibādī annī ana ‘l-ghafūr ‘l-raĥīm”[74](15:49)

XV. The short stepped meter (‘l-mutaqārib): “wa ‘umlī lahum inna kaidī matīn”[75](7:183)

The Insertion (‘l-Idmāj)

According to Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` this occurs when the speaker inserts one objective into another or one literary form into another, such that only one of the objectives or literary forms is manifest, to the exclusion of the other. An example is the statement of the Almighty: “lahū ‘l-ĥamd fī ‘l-‘ūlā wa ‘l-ākhirat”[76](28:80) Here hyperbole and convention are mixed because saying that God alone is worthy of praise in the Hereafter, When He alone, to the exclusion of all else, will remain, may be considered hyperbolic. But in essence, it is not a hyperbole, because God alone is worthy of all praise, and He is always The One in both this world and the Hereafter. I prefer the view that this verse exemplifies the meshing of one objective into some other. Reference to the Resurrection and the Requital was in this case, meshed into the objective itself, which was to extol God alone for all praise.

The Variegated (‘l-Iftinān)

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[70] “We have indeed, created man from a sperm.”

[71] “They were no closer to comprehending the speech.”

[72] “The day of calling out to each other; the day you will turn and flee.”

[73] “In their hearts is a disease.”

[74] “Inform my servants that I am indeed, the All Forgiving, all Merciful.”

[75] “I will give them respite for a while; for my schemings are indeed firm.”

[76] “Unto Him belongs all praise from start to finish.”

This is to produce two separate modes of speech at once, such as the commiseration and the acclamation in the verse: “kullu man `alaihā fān; wa yabqā wujhu rabbika dhu ‘l-jalāl wa ‘l-ikrām”[77](55:27) Here the Almighty commiserates with life possessing things like humans, the jinn, angels. And in ten words He lauds His enduring immortality which will outlive the destruction of all things present . He describes Himself thereafter, as the only immortal, the Majestic and Noble, High and Mighty! And the verse: “thumma nunajji alladhīna ittaqau”[78](19:72) brings together commiserations and congratulations

The Mastery (‘l-Iqtidār)

This is where the speaker expresses a single meaning in multiple ways to illustrate his syntactical skills, and his construction of linguistic devices. At times he illustrates this by way of a metaphor, at others, by a simile, or an abridgement, and at others still, in a realistic form. Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: ‘It is in this form that all the narratives of the Qur’ān appear. You will notice that a single story with no variations in meaning, appears in multiple forms, and with a changing vocabulary. Thus, in no two places will they be alike-and one is bound to find differences in its outward manifestations.

Words that Conform with Other Words and with Other Meanings.

This occurs in the first place where words conform with each other: uncommon words are paired, and common words are similarly, paired. This is done with compatibility and context in mind. And in the second place, it occurs where the words of a statement are in conformity with the intended meaning. Where the meaning is grand the words used are equally grand, and where eloquent, the words used are eloquent. Where however, the meaning is unusual or common, the words used are unusual or common. And the same applies to words that fall between the unusual and the common.

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[77] “Everything that is on it will persih; and the countenance of your Lord, the possessor of Majesty and Sublimeness, will remain.”

[78] “Then We will save those who feared”

An example of the first kind is found in the statement of the Almighty: “tafta’u tadhkuru Yūsuf ĥattā takūna ĥarad”[79](12:85) where the most unusual form of the oath, the *tā’,* is used. This is rarely used, and unlike the *bā’* and the *waw*, is least likely to be understood by the general public. Also unusual is the form of the verbs that puts the noun in the nominative form and the predicate in the accusative. The word *tazālu* is more easily understood and more commonly used. And *ĥarad* the most unusual word for destruction is used. And it is thus apparent that the rules of conformity required, in this case, that in keeping with the context, and with the pairing of meanings to words, that the most unusual word in every category be used. And where the opposite was required as in the verse: “wa aqsamū bi Allāh jahd aimānihim”[80](6:109) all the words used were common and not unusual.

The second is found in the statement of the Almighty: “wa lā tarkanū ila alladhīna źalamū fa tamassakum ‘l-nār”[81](11:113) Because the word *rukūn* suggests leaning towards, and sanctioning injustice without actual participation, it was necessary for its punishment to be less severe than for injustice. Thus the word *‘l-mass* which is less than burning and being in flames is used. And in the verse: “lahā mā kasabat wa `alaihā ma iktasabat”[82](2:286) the verb derived from *‘l-iktisāb* alludes to some burden, and by way of its weightiness, stresses the gravity of the evil. And similarly, in the verse: “fa kubkibū fīhā”[83](26:94) *kubkibū* is used because it is more graphic than *kubbū*. This alludes to them being hurled roughly, and mercilessly. And *yastarikhūn* in the verse: “wa hum yastarikhūna”[84](35:37) is more intense than *yaśrakhūn* and it alludes to them screaming horribly out of control. And the verse: “akhdha `azīz muqtadir”[85](54:42) uses the intense form of the word *qādir* to allude to His omnipotence, to there being no power able to deter Him, or to repel Him. The same is true for the verse: “wa iśţabir”(19:95) which is more intense than *iśbir*. The word *‘l-raĥmān* is also more intense than *‘l-raĥīm*: the former alludes to glory and rank, and the latter to benevolence, and friendliness.

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[79] “You continue to mention Joseph to the point of becoming physically broken.”

[80] “And they swore to God with their most solemn oaths.”

[81] ‘And incline not to those who are unjust lest the Fire touch you.”

[82] “TO his credit is whatever good he does; and to his detriment is whatever evil he does.”

[83] “They will be hurled into it.”

[84] “And they will be shouting out.”

[85] “We seized them with the grip of the one who determines all things.”

Included herein are the words *saqā* and *asqā*: the former applies where quenching occurs without any difficulty. Thus the Almighty uses the term in the verse: “wa saqāhum rabbuhum sharāban ţahūran”[86](76:21) in reference to the drink of Paradise. The latter however, refers to quenching with difficulty, and is thus used in reference to the drink of this world. The verses thus say: “Wa asqainākum mā’an furātan”[87](77:27) and : “la asqaināhum mā’an ghadaqan”[88](72:16) because quenching on this earth is never devoid of some difficulty.

Emendation and Exception (*‘l-Istidrāk* and *‘l-Istithnā’*)

To belong to the category of good style they must incorporate qualities that are greater than those inherent in their individual words. An example of an emendation is: “qālat ‘l-a`rāb āmannā; qul lam tu’minū wa lākin qūlū aslamnā” [89](49:14) Stopping at *lam tu’minū* would have alienated them, for they believed that only a verbal affirmation of the doctrinal formula (*shahāda*) without belief is required. The rules of rhetoric required that the statement be emended to inform them that belief is when the tongue conforms to the heart. But when the tongue alone is involved it is called Islam and not īmān. This is further clarified by the statement: “wa lammā yadkhul ‘l-īmān fī qulūbikum”[90](29:14) And because the emendation clarified an obscurity in the language it was considered an element of style.

An example of the exception is the verse: “fa labitha fīhim alf sanat illā khamsīn `āman”[91](29:14) Mentioning this period with these words gives Noah his excuse for invoking God against his own people by his call to have them destroyed to the last person. But words such as “he lived among them for nine hundred and fifty years” would not have been as effective as the word ‘thousand’, which when it strikes the ear grabs the attention of the listener, and motivates him to listen to the remainder of the statement. And the exception when it appears lacks the capacity to remove the impact of the word thousand.

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[86] ‘And their Lord will give them to drink a pure drink

[87] “And We gave you sweet water to drink.”

[88] “And We gave them abundant water.”

[89] ‘The bedouins say that they believe. Say: “You have not believed. Say rather: “We have submitted.”

[90] “And given that faith has yet to enter your hearts.”

[91] “And so he lived among them for a thousand years less fifity.”

The Excerpt (‘l-Iqtiśāś)

This category, mentioned by Ibn Fāris, occurs where one statement in a chapter is excerpted from another statement in the same chapter or in some other chapter. One example is reference to the after life in the verse: “wa ātaināhu ajrahū fī ‘l-dunyā wa innahū fi ‘l-ākhirat la min ‘l-śāliĥīn”[92](29:27) This however, is the abode of reward in which there is no toil. But this reference to toil is excerpted from the verse: “wa man ya’tihī mu’minan qad `amila ‘l-śāliĥāt fa ‘ulā’ika lahum ‘l-darajāt ‘l-`ulā”[93](20:75) Similarly, the verse: “wa lau lā ni`mat rabbī la kuntu min ‘l-muĥďarīn”[94](37:57) is excerpted from: “‘ulā’ika fī ‘l-`adhāb muĥďarūn” [95](34:38) And the verse: “wa yauma yaqūmu ‘l-ashhād”[96](40:51) is an excerpt of four different verses, representing the four groups that bear witness. The angels are excerpted from the verse: “wa jā’at kullu nafs ma`ahā sā’iq wa shahīd”[97](18:21); the apostles from the verse: “fa kaifa idhā ji’nā min kull ummat bi shahīd wa ji’nā bika `alā hā’ulā’i shahīd”[98](4:41); the community of Muĥammad from the verse: “li takūnū shuhadā’a `alā ‘l-nās”[99](2:143); and the limbs from the verse: “yaum tashhadu `alaihim alsinatuhum”[100](24:24)

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[92] “And We will give him his rewards in this world while in the afterlife he will be among the pious.”

[93] “And whosoever comes to Him as a believer, as one who did good deeds; Such persons will have lofty positions.”

[94] “And if it was not for the bounty of my Lord I would surely have been of those who suffer.”

[95] “Such persons suffer in the punishment.”

[96] “ON the day when the witnesses will stand.”

[97] “And every soul will appear, accompanied by (Angels) who drive him, and who bear witness.”

[98] “How then (will the wrongdoers fare) when We bring forth a witness from each community and bring you as a witness unto them.”

[99] ‘SO that you may be witnesses unto mankind.”

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[100] “On a day when their tongues shall bear testimony against them.”

And the verse: “yaum ‘l-tanād”[101] (40:32) is recited with and without stress. The former is excerpted from the verse: “wa nādā asĥāb ‘l-jannat asĥāb ‘l-nār”[102](7:44) and the latter from the verse: “yaum yafirr ‘l-mar’u min akhīhi”[103](80:34)

The Substitution (‘l-Ibdāl)

Here one part of a word substitutes for some other. Ibn Fāris has included herein the verse: “fa infalaq” [104](26:63) where the word *infalaqa* when reconfigured, would read *infaraqa*. Which is why it goes on to say: “fa kāna kullu firq”[105](26:63) And the letters *lām* and *rā’* are alternates. And Khalīl furnishes the following verse as an example: “fa jāsū khilāl ‘l-diyār”[106](17:5) which reconstituted, would have read: *fa ĥāsū* except for the fact that the letter *jīm* appeared in place of the *ĥā’*. But it is also recited with the *ĥā’*. ‘l-Fārisī included the verse: “innī aĥbabtu ĥubb ‘l-khair”[107](38:32) which reconstituted would read: *‘l-khail*. Abū `Ubaida included the verse: “illā mukā’an wa tasdiyat”[108](8:35) which reconstituted, would read: *tasdidat.*

Stressing the Approbation such that it Resembles the Rebuke

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[101] “. . .on the day when you will call out to each other.”

[102] ‘And on the day when the companions of Heaven will call out to the companions of Hell.”

[103] ‘On the day when a person will abandon his brother.”

[104] “It was split asunder.”

[105] “And each of the parts. . .”

[106] “And they wreaked havoc throughout the land.”

[107] “I have indeed, come to love the love of good things.”

[108] “Whistling and clapping of hands.”

Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “This is extremely rare in the Qur’ān.” And he said: “I found no more than one verse in this regard: “qul yā ahl ‘l-kitāb lima tanqimūna minnā illā an āmannā bi Allāh”[109](5:59) The exception which appears after the interrogative particle does so as a rebuke to what they found objectionable about the believer’s faith. This gives the impression that the statement that follows can be held against the perpetrator as being objectionable. But the statement that follows can only be construed as reason to praise its perpetrator. This therefore, is a case of the approbation which resembles a rebuke.

I would say that the following two verses also fit this description: “wa mā naqamū illā an aghnāhum Allāh wa rasūluhū min faďlihī”[110](9:74) and: “alladhīna ‘ukhrijū min diyārihim bi ghair ĥaqq illā an yaqūlū rabbunā Allāh”[111](22:40) On the face of it the exception would seem to suggest that the statement that follows would justify the eviction. But it turns out to be a praiseworthy act that justifies respect, not eviction. Thus here too, approbation is being stressed in the form of a rebuke.

Tanūkhī, in the work *‘l-Aqśā ‘l-Qarīb* includes the verse: “lā yasma`ūna fīhā laghwan wa lā ta’thīman; illā qīlan salāman salāman”[112](56:25,26) where the words *salāman! salāman!* which are the opposite of vain talk and calls to sinfulness are excepted. This therefore, stresses the non existence of vain talk and of calls to sinfulness.”

Delegation(*Tafwīt*)

This is when the speaker, in a single statement with multiple nuances, uses several rhetorical devices, in separate phrases, to praise, describe, etc., such that the phrases together share a particular cadence. This appears in lengthy, medium and short sentences. To the lengthy sentences belongs the verse: “alladhī khalaqanī fa huwa yahdīn; wa alladhī yuţ`imunī wa yasqīn;

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[109] “Say: “O People of the Book Do you find fault in us, for no other reason except that we believe in God.”

[110] “And they found nothing blameworthy, except that God and His Messenger had enriched them with His bounty.”

[111] “Those who were evicted from their homes unjustly, only because they said that God is our Lord.”

[112] “They will not listen to vain talk nor any call to sin; only calls for peace! peace!

wa idhā mariďtu fu huwa yashfīn; wa alladhī yumītunī wa yuĥyīn”[113](26:78-81) And to the medium sentences belongs the verse: “tūlij ‘l-lail fī il-nahār wa tūlij ‘l-nahār fī ‘l-lail; wa tukhrij ‘l-ĥayy min ‘l-mayyit wa tukhrij mayyit min ‘l-ĥayy”[114](3:27) And Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “Sentences of the short type do not appear in theQur’ān.”

Distribution (‘l-Taqsīm)

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[113] “The One who created me and guides me; And the One who feeds me and gives me drink; And when I take ill then it is He who cures me; And it is He who causes me to die and then resurrects me.”

[114] “You lengthen the night by shortening the day; and you lengthen the day by shortening the night; and you bring out the living from the dead; and you bring out the dead from the living.”

This is an exhaustive description of the qualities present in an object, and not just latent within it. This is the case with the verse: “huwa alladhī yurīkum ‘l-barq khaufan wa ţama`an”[115](13:12), for the picture of lightning can only instil, a fear of its thunderbolts and hopes of rain. There is no third to these two kinds.

And the verse: “fa minhum źālim li nafsihī wa minhum muqtaśid wa minhum sābiq”[116](35:32) This is because the world comprises only of these three categories: a sinner who does injustice to himself, a virtuous person who is foremost in good deeds; and a person in between who adopts a middle path.”

The same is true for the verse: “wa kuntum azwājan thalātha; fa aśĥāb ‘l-maimanat mā aśĥāb ‘l-maimanat; Wa aśĥāb ‘l-mash’amat mā aśĥāb ‘l-mash’amat; wa ‘l-sābiqūn ‘l-sābiqūn”[117](56:7,10). And the verse: “lahū mā baina aidīnā wa mā khalfanā wa mā baina dhālika”[118](19:64) which exhausts all the periods of time; and there is no fourth.

And the verse: “wa Allāh khalaqa kulla dābbat min mā’in; fa minhum man yamshī `alā baţnihī wa minhum man yamshī `alā rijlain; wa minhum man yamshī `alā arba`in”[119](24:45) covers all creatures that move.

And the verse: “alladhīna yadhkurūna Allāh qiyāman wa qu`ūdan wa `alā junūbihim”[120](3:191) covers all possible positions adopted by one engaged in remembrance.

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[115] “It is He who shows you the lightning: it fills you with fear and hope.”

[116] “And of them are some who do injustice to themselves; and of them are those who are in between; and of them are those who are foremost in good deeds.”

[117] “And you will be in three groups: the companions of the right–how joyful will the companions of the right be? The companions of the left–how joyful will the companions of the left be? And those foremost-Ah! the foremost ones!

[118] “Unto Him belongs that which is with us, and that which is beyond our scope, and that which is in between.”

[119] “And God created every animal from: of them some crawl on their bellies; and of them some walk of twos; and of them some walk on fours.”

[120] “Those who remember God standing, sitting, and on their sides.”

And the verse: “yahabu liman yashā’u ināthan wa yahabu liman yashā’u ‘l-dhukūr au yuzawwijuhum dhukrānan wa ināthan; wa yaj`alu man yashā’u `aqīman.”[121](25:49,50) covers all the circumstances of those married; and there is no fifth category.

Embellishment (‘l-Tadbīj)

Here the speaker mentions different colors by way of a double entendre or a metaphor. Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` exemplifies this by the following statement of the Almighty: “wa min ‘l-jibāl judadun bīďun wa ĥumrun mukhtalifun alwānuhā wa gharābīb sūd” [122](35:27) He said: “God knows best, but this is a metaphor for paths that are clear and unclear. Thus, it is the white path which is very well trodden, most clear and therefore, most distinguishable. Less clear is the red path, and even less so, is the black path, almost in contrast to the white, in distinction and clarity. And to the eye these three colors appear to represent two extremes and a middle: the most distinct is white, the most obscure, black, with red, as in the spectrum of colors, lying in between. Mountains assume these three hues alone, and all known forms of guidance too, seem to manifest themselves, in three similar patterns. The verse therefore, is so divided to illustrate this embellishment and an appropriate division.

Extraction (‘l-Tankīt)

This is when the speaker intends one specific item to the exclusion of all others that fall into the same category. And he does so because the item in question has a quality that justifies its special treatment over all other items in that category. Thus in the verse of the Almighty: “wa annahū huwa rabb ‘l-shi`rā”[123](53:49) it is the star *‘l-shi`rā* that is singled out for special mention, to the exclusion of all other stars, even though the Almighty is the Lord of all things. But among the Arabs a man known as Ibn Abū Kabsha worshiped *‘l-shi`rā*, and invited others to do so as well. God Almighty thus revealed the verse “wa annahū huwa rabb ‘l-shi`rā” in which lordship is claimed.

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[121] “He gives to whomsoever He wants a female; and He gives to whomsoever He wants, a male. And He bestows both males and females; and He makes whomsoever He wants, childless.”

[122] “And of the mountains: there are streaks of white and red; of varying colors; and of a deep black.”

[123] “And that He is the Lord of the star ‘l-shi`rā”

Stripping (‘l-Tajrīd)

To stress how perfect a certain quality is within one object, the latter is stripped from another similar object in which that quality so to speak, is not present. Thus, the phrase *sadīq ĥamīm* having the quality of friendship, in the statement *lī min fulān sadīq ĥamīm* is seemingly stripped from another phrase *‘l-rajul ‘l-sadīq* And in the statement *marartu bi ‘l-rajul ‘l-karīm wa ‘l-nasimat ‘l-mubāraka* another *rajul* with the special quality of nobility is isolated from *‘l-rajul ‘l-karīm*. He is then appended to him as if he is someone else, although he is the very same person.

An example of this in the Qur’ān is the verse: “lahum fīhā dār ‘l-khuld”[124](41:28) This is not to say that Heaven has in it an abode of eternity and an abode of non eternity, but rather, that it is in itself an abode of eternity. And, as mentioned in the work *‘l-Muĥtasab* it is as if a separate abode has been isolated from the abode. Included herein is the verse: “yukhriju ‘l-ĥayya min ‘l-mayyit wa mukhrij ‘l-mayyit min ‘l-ĥayy”[125](6:95) if by the word *‘l-mayyit* is meant sperm. Zamakhsharī has said: “And `Ubaid b. `Umair recited (the word *wardatun*) in the verse: “fa kānat wardat ka ‘l-dihān”[126](55:37) in the nominative case. Which would imply that from it emerged a rose. He said: “This belongs to the category of stripping.” Another verse recited differently is: ‘yarithunī wa wārith min āl ya`qūb”[127](19:6) Ibn Jinnī has said: “This is stripping, because when reconfigured it would read *wahaba lī min ladunka waliyyan yarithunī minhu wārith min āl ya`qūb* Whilst it is he who is the heir, the impression given is that some separate heir was stripped of him.

Enumeration (‘l-Ta`dīd)

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[124] “For them therein is the abode of eternity.”

[125] ‘He is the One who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living.”

[126] “IT would be like a melting rose.”

[127] “He will be my heir and the heir of the family of Jacob”

Here several single words are mentioned in the same format. It occurs most often with adjectives, as in the verse: “huwa Allāh alladhī lā ilāha illā huwa ‘l-malik ‘l-quddūs ‘l-salām ‘l-mu’min ‘l-muhaimin ‘l-`azīz ‘l-jabbār ‘l-mutakabbir”[128](59:23). Other examples are the verse: “‘l-tā’ibūn ‘l-`ābidūn ‘l-ĥāmidūn [129](9:112) and the verse: “muslimāt mu’mināt”[130](66:5)

The Sequence (‘l-Tartīb)

Here the attributes of an object are cited in their natural order of creation, with no additional attributes. `Abd ‘l-Bāqī ‘l-Yamanī exemplifies this by way of the verse: “huwa alladhī khalaqakum min turāb thumma min nuţfat thumma min `alaqat thumma yukhrijukum ţiflan thumma litablughū ‘ashuddakum thumma li takūnū shuyūkhan” [131](40:14) And by the verse: “fa kadhdhabūhu fa `aqarūhā”[132](91:45)

Raising and Lowering (‘l-Taraqqī wa ‘l-Tadallī)

Both these categories have been discussed in the section on advancing and retarding.

Ellipses (‘l-Tadmīn)

This is applied to several things:

A. Where one word is substituted for some other because it incorporates the same meaning. This is a type of metaphor which has already been discussed.

B. Where a statement encompasses a meaning but is nonetheless devoid of the actual word towards which such a meaning points. This is a form of brevity which has already been discussed.

C. Where there is a linkage to a statement which appears after the pause, And this appears in the category on the pauses.

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[128] “He is God, bedsides who there is no other deity. He is the supreme Sovereign, the Hallowed, the Defect Free, the Giver of Faith, the Almighty, the Subduer, The One worthy of all Greatness.”

[129] “Those who are repentant, those who worship, those who extol. . .”

[130] ‘Muslims, believers. . .”

[131] “It is He who created you from dust, then from sperm, then from congealed blood, then He delivered you as a child, and let you reach your full strength, and then to reach old age.”

[132] “They belied him; and they hamstrung it.”

D. Where some foreign statement is inserted with a view to adding stress, or to arranging the syntax. It is this category that belongs to good style. Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “I was unable to find examples hereof in the Qur’ān except in two places where sections from the Torah and the Gospels were inserted. They are: “wa katabnā `alaihim fīhā anna ‘l-nafsa bi ‘l-nafsi”[133](5:45) and: “Muĥammad rasūl Allāh”[134](48:29) Ibn ‘l-Naqīb and others have illustrated this by reference to the dialogs of the creatures in the Qur’ān. An example is the Almighty quoting the angels: “a taj`alu fīhā man yufsidu fīhā”[135](2:168); and the Hypocrites: “a nu’minu ka mā āmana ‘l-sufahā’u”[136](2:30) or “wa qālat ‘l-yahūd”[137](2:113) and “wa qālat ‘l-naśārā”[138](2:113) To this category belong foreign language insertions.

Pun (*‘l-Jinās*)

This is where two words are similar in pronunciation. According to the work *Kanz ‘l-Barā`a* it serves to draw attention, because words that are similar attract attention and draw interest. Furthermore, when words that sound similar and refer to the same meaning are suddenly used for different meanings then that does indeed, pique interest. There are many forms of assonance. They include:

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[133] ‘And We had decreed for them therein that there should be a life for a life.”

[134] “Muĥammad is the messenger of God.”

[135] “Will you install therein one who will make mischief therein!”

[136] “Will you believe just as the feeble minded believe.”

[137] “The Jews say. . .”

[138] “The Christians say. . .”

1. Complete (*‘l-tām*): Where words share letters, structure, numbers, and forms, as with the word *sā`at* in the verse of the Almighty: “wa yauma taqūm ‘l-sā`at yuqsimu ‘l-mujrimūn mā labithū ghair sā`at”[139](30:55) Apart from this example no other such verse, it is said, appears anywhere in the Qur’ān. But the *Shaikh ‘l-Islām* Ibn Hajr ‘l-Asqalānī has furnished another example: “yakād sanā barqihī yadhhabu bi ‘l-abśār; yuqallibu Allāh ‘l-lail wa ‘l-nahār inna fī dhālika la `ibrat li ‘ulī ‘l-abśār” [140](24:43-44) Some have argued against the first verse belonging to the category of assonance. They maintain that ‘the hour’ in both instances mean the same thing, whereas a pun requires the same word to have different meanings. Also, one word should not be literal and the other figurative; rather, they should both be literal. And the Last Hour, despite its duration, is, in reference to God, equal to a single hour. Whilst the ascription of the Hour to Resurrection is literal, to the Last Day it is figurative. This therefore falls outside the category of puns, and is equivalent to saying: *rakibtu ĥimāran wa laqaitu ĥimāran* where the word *himār* in its second usage means idiot.
2. Mispronounced (‘l-Musaĥĥaf): This form, also known as *jinās ‘l-khaţţ*, comprises of letters with dissimilar pronunciations. An example is: “wa alladhī huwa yuţ`imunī wa yasqīn; wa idha mariďtu fahuwa yashfīn” [141](26:79,80) Also in this category is the distorted pun (*‘l-muĥarraf*), and it refers to differences in diacritical markings. An example is the verse: “wa laqad arsalnā fīhim mundhirīn; fa undhur kaifa kāna `āqibat ‘l-mundharīn”[142](37:72) And “wa hum yaĥsabūna annahum yuĥsinūna sun`an”[143](18:104)exemplifies a verse where both the distorted and the mispronounced

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[139] “And when the Last Hour is heralded the iniquitous will proclaim: ‘We have tarried no more than an hour!”

[140] “The intensity of His lightning flash almost takes away sight; God alternates the night and the day. In that is indeed a lesson for those with insight.”

[141] “And the One who feeds me and provides me with drink; and when I take ill He heals me.”

[142] ‘And We have dispatched among them warners; now ponder the fate of those who were warned.”

[143] “And they imagine that they are doing good deeds.”

appear together.

3. The Incomplete (‘l-Nāqiś), where the amount of letters vary, and where such letters appear variously, at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the verse. An example is the verse: “wa ‘ltaffat ‘l-sāq bi ‘l-sāq ilā rabbika yauma’idhin ‘l-masāq”[144](75:30) and “thumma kulī min kulli ‘l-thamarāt”[145](16:69)
4. The Appendix (‘l-Mudhdhayyil) where one of the words has extra letters in front or at the back. Some have termed the latter as the crowned (*mutawwaj*). Examples are: “wa undhur ilā ilāhika “[146](20:97); “wa lākinnā kunnā mursilīn”[147](28:45); “man āmana bihī”[148](7:86); “inna rabbahum bihim”[149](100:11); and “mudhabdhabīn baina dhālika”[150](4:143)
5. The Similar (‘l-mudāri`) where the difference is a single letter which is pronounced in much the same way, and which may occur in the beginning, the middle, or the end of the verse. An example is: “wa hum yanhauna `anhu wa yan’auna `anhu”[151](6:26)
6. The Attached (‘l-lāĥiq) where the difference is a single letter which is not pronounced in much the same way. Examples are: “wail li kulli humazat lumazat”[152](104:1); “wa innahū `alā dhālika la shahīd; wa innahū li ĥubb ‘l-khair la shadīd”[153](100:7,8); “dhālikum bimā kuntum tafraĥūna fī ‘l-ard bi ghair ‘l-ĥaqq wa bimā kuntum tamraĥūn”[154](40:75); and “wa

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[144] “When shank is wrapped around shank; towards your sustainer will be the driving.”

[145] ‘Then eat of each fruit.”

[146] ‘And look at your god. . .”

[147] “But we were rather, the messengers.”

[148] ‘Those who believed in Him.

[149] “Their Lord is to them. . .”

[150] “Vacillating between this and that.

[151] “And they restrict others from him, and themselves stay away from him. . .”

[152] “Woe unto every fault finder, backbiter.

[153] ‘And to that is he himself indeed, witness; and to the love of wealth is he most devoted.”

[154] “And that is because you so arrogantly exulted on earth without justification, and

idhā jā’ahum amr min ‘l-‘amn”[155](4:37)

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because you were so filled with conceit.”

[155] ‘And if any matter pertaining to peace comes to them.”

7. The Conjoined (‘l-Muraffaq), where one word is similar to parts of another, as in the verse: “juruf hār fa inhār”[156](9:105)
8. The Verbal (‘l-lafźī) where the difference is a letter in one word, which when pronounced, is similar to one in the other word. An example are the letters *ďād* and *źā* as found in the verse: “wujūh yauma’idhin nāďirat; ilā rabbihā nāźirat” [157](75:22,23)
9. The Inversion (‘l-Qalb) where the sequence of the letters is transposed, as in the verse: “farraqta baina banī isrā’īl”[158](20:94)
10. The Derivation (‘l-Ishtiqāq) where both words are derived from the same root. This is also known as the ‘condensed’ (*‘l-muqtaďab*) Examples are the following: “fa rauĥ wa raiĥān”[159](56:89); “fa aqim wajhaka li ‘l-dīn ‘l-qayyim”[160](30:43); and “wajjahtu wajhiya”[161](6:79)
11. The Ascribed (‘l-Iţlāq) where the resemblance is on the surface only. This is so in the following cases: “wa jana ‘l-jannatain”[162](55:54); “qāla innī li `amalikum min ‘l-qālīn” [163](25:168); “li yuriyahū kaifa yuwārī”[164](5:31); “wa in yuridka bi khair fa lā rādda” [165](10:107); “aththāāqaltum ila ‘l-arď; ‘a raďītum”[166](9:38); “wa idhā an`amnā `alā ‘l-insān

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[156] “Weathered river bank; and it crumbles. . .”

[157] “Faces on that day will be radiant; looking at their Lord”

[158] “You have caused a division among the Children of Israel.”

[159] “. . .rest and provision

[160] “So position yourself with the one true faith.”

[161] “. . .direct my face. . .”

[162] “And the fruit will be in easy reach.”

[163] “He said: ‘I am indeed, disgusted with your practice.”

[164] “. . .to show him how to conceal. . .

[165] “And if He chooses good for you then nothing can turn. . .”

[166] “You are weighed down to the ground; are you satisfied with. . .”

a`raďa. . . fa dhū du`ā’ arīď”[167](41:51)

Note

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[167] ‘And when We are bountiful to man he turns. . .He engages in long supplications.”

Because the pun serves to embellish language rather than meaning it is abandoned in cases where the meaning is powerful. An example is the statement of the Almighty: “wa mā anta bi mu’min lanā wa lau kunnā śādiqīn”[168](12:17) Why not say *wa mā anta muśaddiq* instead, and thereby deliver meaning together with pun? To this question comes the reply that *mu'min lanā* embodies the kind of meaning not found in *muśaddiq*. The statement *fulān muśaddiq lī* implies that he told me ‘you speak the truth’ (*śadaqta*), whereas the word *mu'min* implies both believing and trusting. Their purpose therefore, was more than to affirm; it was to obtain trust–which is why the verse is formulated as such.

And some among the literati have erred in their view that if the verse: “a tad`ūn ba`lan wa tadharūna aĥsan ‘l-khāliqīn”(37:125) used the word *tada`ūn* instead of *tadharūn* then the added benefit would have been use of the pun. The imam Fakhr ‘l-Dīn replied that the eloquence of the Qur’ān serves not to pander to such formalities but to strengthen meaning and to provide good style. Others have said that concerns about meaning take precedence over words. Using the words *'a tad`ūna* and *tada`ūna* would have confused the reader, who would ascribed similar meanings to both words, and put the difference down to a printing error. This however is not an adequate response. Ibn Zamlakānī replied that the pun serves to embellish, and is thus used in places that hold out promise and virtue and not in places that threaten. ‘l-Khuwayyī responds that the word *yada`u* is more specific than *yadhar* because it connotes the abandonment of a sought after object. This is supported by the etymology of the word. Thus, *'l-īdā`* a related term, refers to depositing an object with due concern for its welfare. This also explains why care is taken in entrusting such an object to a trustworthy person. And so too, is the case with the word *'l-da`at* which means ease. But the word *tadhar* means total abandonment or abandonment because of rejection, or total rejection.

Rāghib has said: The saying goes *fulān yadhar 'l-shay'* which means that he tosses it out, with little care. Hence, the word *'l-wadhar*at which refers to a piece of meat that is thrown out because of a lack of need. No doubt, the context favors this meaning over the first because the objective here is to illustrate adversely, their rejection of their Lord, in a manner, most despicable.

The Union (‘l-Jam`u)

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[168] ‘You will not believe us even though we are truthful.”

Here two or more things are combined under a single rule, as in the case of the verse: "'l-māl wa 'l-banūn zīnat 'l-ĥayāt 'l-dunya"[169](18:46) where wealth and children are jointly described as adornments. The same is true of the verse: "'l-shams wa 'l-qamar bi ĥusbān; wa 'l-najm wa 'l-shajar yasjudān"[170](55:5,6)

The Union and the Separation ('l-Jam`u wa 'l-tafrīq)

This is to include two things into a single category and to separate their modes of entry. Tībī has included the following verse in this category: "Allāh yatawaffa 'l-anfus ĥīna mautihā . . ."[171](39:42) Both groups of persons are included in this process of taking up souls. Then a distinction is made between those souls decreed to remain and those allowed to return. It is thus God who holds back and sends forth. Or it is God who causes souls to be taken: those held back as well as those released. He holds back the former and releases the latter.

The Union and the Arrangement ('l-Jam`u wa 'l-Taqsīm)

Here several things are combined under a single rule and then arranged, as in the verse: "thumma aurathnā 'l-kitāb alladhīna iśţafainā min `ibādinā; fa minhum źālim li nafsihī; wa minhum muqtaśid; wa minhum sābiq bi 'l-khairāt"[172](35:32)

The Union, The Separation and the Arrangement ('l-Jam`u ma`a 'l-Tafrīq wa 'l-Taqsīm)

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[169] "Wealth and sons are the adornments of the worldly life."

[170] "The sun and the moon have measured movements; and the star and the tree prostrate."

[171] "It is God who causes persons to die at the time of their death."

[172] "Then We bequeathed the Book to those of our servants We favored; Some were unjust to themselves, others restrained in both good and evil, and others still vying in the performance of good deeds."

This appears in the statement of the Almighty: “yauma ya’ti lā takallamu nafsun illā bi idhnihī. . .” [173](11: 105-108) The union is in the verse: “lā takallamu nafsun illā bi idhnihī” because in reality there are several such persons. This is in accordance with the rule that an indefinite noun (*nafs*) used in a negative context serves to generalize. The separation is to be found in: “fa minhum shaqiyyun wa sa`īd”, and the arrangement in: fa amma alladhīna shaqū” and “wa amma alladhīna su`idū”.

The Union of that which is Similar and that which is Dissimilar (Jam`u ‘l-Mu’talaf wa ‘l-Mukhtalaf)

This, in the first instance, is to show equality in the attributes ascribed to two persons, through the usage of words common to both, and to then privilege one over the other, such that the qualities of one person increase, but without any decrease in those of the other person. Thus words that contradict equality are used, as in the case of the verse: “wa dāwūda wa sulaimān idh yaĥkumān. . .”[174](21:78) where both are portrayed as being equal in power and knowledge, and Solomon is then shown to have greater understanding.

Symmetry (Husn ‘l-Nasaq)

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[173] “When that day arrives, no soul will speak except with His permission; (of those gathered) some will be wretched, others, happy. As for those who are wretched, they will be in the Fire: in it is nothing but moans and sobs. They will abide therein for as long as the skies and the earth have endured, except where your Lord wills otherwise. Your Lord is indeed, one who does as He pleases. As for those who will be happy, they will be in Heaven; they will abide therein for as long as the skies and the earth have endured, except where your Lord wills otherwise. This is an eternal gift.

[174] “And remember David and Solomon when they ruled. . .

Here, words used in statements are symmetrical, sequential, and so pleasantly cohesive that even when separated, such statements stand alone, with meanings derived solely from the words themselves. Thus the separate phrases of the verse: “wa qīla yā ard ibla`ī mā’aki. . .” [175](11:44) are linked by the conjunction, *wāw*, in accordance with the rules of rhetoric. The first phrase begins with the most important event, which is the disappearance of the water from the face of the earth. This was the primary concern of the ship’s passengers waiting to get out of its prison like confines. Then follows the cessation of water from the skies–everything depended on this, because the difficulties lying outside the ship could not otherwise be avoided. Then the differences present on the earth are discussed, followed by the disappearance of the waters responsible for the flood. Thereafter, the decree comes to pass, and those so destined are destroyed, and those not, saved. This is mentioned afer the foregoing events, because the ship’s passengers only learnt of it after disembarking. The latter however, was contingent upon the occurrence of all the foregoing events. The verse then speaks of the ship coming to a halt, and resting, thus signifying the replacement of their sense of fear and uncertainty with security. It concludes by cursing the unjust, to show that whilst the Flood had deluged the entire earth, it only afflicted those deserving punishment because of their injustice.

Self Criticism (*`Itāb ‘l-mar’i Nafsahū*)

Included herein are the verses: “wa yauma ya`aďďu ‘l-źālim `alā yadaihi yaqūl yā laitanī” [176](25:27)and the verse: “an taqūla nafsun yā ĥasratā `alā mā farraţtu fī janb Allāh”[177](39:56)

The Inversion (*‘l-`Aks*)

This is to alternate parts of a verse such that the first part of the verse appears again at the end of that very verse. Examples are: “mā `alaika min ĥisābihim min shai’in wa mā min ĥisābika `alaihim min shai’in”[178](6:52); “yūlij ‘l-laila fī ‘l-nahār wa yūlij ‘l-nahār fi ‘l-lail”[179](22:61); “wa

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[175] “O Earth! Swallow up your water! And O Sky! stop the rain! And the waters sank; and the deed was done; and the boat came to rest on Judī.”

[176] “And on the day when the unjust person will gnaw on his hand saying ‘Woe unto me!. . .”

[177] “Lest the human being says: ‘Woe unto me! How excessively disobedient have I been with what is God’s due.”

[178] “You are not responsible for their account in any way, nor are they responsible on your account, in any way.”

man yukhrij ‘l-ĥayya min ‘l-mayyit wa yukhrij ‘l-mayyit min ‘l-ĥayy”[180](10:31); “hunna libās lakum wa antum libās lahunna”[181](2:187); “lā hunna ĥill lahum wa lā hum yaĥillūna lahunna”[182](60:10)

When asked about the wisdom of inverting this word in the last verse Ibn ‘l-Munīr said: “It serves to show that the Disbelievers are also subject to the rules of the sacred law.” The master, Badr ‘l-Dīn b. ‘l-Sāĥib said: “The truth is that the act is proscribed for both the believer and the disbeliever: the believing woman is prohibited directly, whereas the disbeliever is prohibited because such a sexual relationship will lead to corruption. Thus, it is not the disbeliever who is being addressed, but the leadership and its deputies encumbered with preventing this from happening. The sacred law, after all, requires that life be free from corruption. It is thus clear that in the case of the believing woman, as well as the disbeliever, the act is proscribed because of certain considerations.

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[179] “He merges the night into day, and He merges the day into night.”

[180] “And the One who extracts the living from the dead, and the One who extracts the dead from the living.”

[181] “You are a garment unto them, and they are a garment unto you.”

[182] “Neither are they lawful unto you, nor are you lawful unto them.”

Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “One peculiar form of address is the verse: “wa man ya`mal min ‘l-śāliĥāt min dhakar au ‘unthā wa huwa mu’min fa ‘ulā’ika yadkhulūna ‘l-jannat wa lā yuźlamūna naqīran; wa man aĥsan dīnan min man aslama wajhahū li Allāh wa huwa muĥsin”[183](4:124,125) The first verse is arranged differently from the second because action precedes faith in the former, but is in turn preceded by Islam in the latter.

Also included herein is a category known as *qalb wa ‘l-maqlūb ‘l-mustawii*(Parity Between the Inverted to and the Inverted from) and *mālā yastaĥīl bi ‘l-in`ikās* (That Which is not Impossible if Reflexed) Here the word can be read from end to beginning, as well as from beginning to end. An example is the verse: “kullun fī falak”[184](21:33) and the verse: “wa rabbaka fa kabbir”[185](74:3) There are no other such verses in the Qur’ān.

Title (‘l-`Unwān)

Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` says that this occurs where the speaker with a particular motive proceeds to complete or to stress such a motive using words that together form the title of some upcoming or previous narrative. There are also a great number which appear as titles for the various sciences, in the form of words that together form the basis of and introduction to these science.

An example of a narrative is the verse: “wa ‘utlu `alaihim naba’a alladhī ātaināhu āyātinā fa insalakha bihī”[186](7:157) which is the title to the story of Bal`ām”

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[183] “And whosoever, among men or women, does any good whilst believing, such persons will enter paradise, and will not be treated unjustly, not even equal to the groove of a date stone. And who is better in faith than one who surrenders his countenance to God and he is virtuous.”

[184] “All of them are in an orbit.”

[185] “And your Lord: Extol Him!

[186] “And recite unto them the story of that person unto whom We gave our verses, and who slunk away from them.”

An example of a science is the verse: “Inţaliqū ilā źill dhī thalāth shu`ab”[187](77:30,31) which is the title for the science of engineering. This is because the triangle is the foremost of forms, and when any one of its sides is raised facing the sun no shadow is formed, and this is because of the sharpness of its edges. And by way of ridicule God Almighty orders the people of Hell Fire to seek shelter under an object with this shape!

And the verse: “wa kadhālika nurī Ibrāhīm malakūt ‘l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard”[188](6:75) serves as a title for the sciences of metaphysics, polemics and astronomy.

The Precious (‘l-Farā’id)

This is peculiar to eloquence rather than to rhetoric because it requires the usage of words that act like gems in a necklace, like incomparable jewels. It points to the great eloquence of this Book, to the power of its expression, the purity of its logic, and the originality of its Arabic. Thus, if it were to be dropped from a statement, the eloquent ones would have difficulty replacing it.

The following verses serve as examples: the word *ĥaśĥaśa* in the verse: “al’āna ĥaśĥaśa ‘-ĥaqq”[189](12:51); the word *‘l-rafath* in the verse: “Uĥilla lakum lailat ‘l-śiyām ‘l-rafath ilā nisā’ikum”[190](2:187); the word *fuzzi`a* in the verse: “ĥattā idhā fuzzi`a `an qulūbihim”[191](34:23); and the words *khā’inat ‘l-a`yun* in the verse: “ya`lamu khā’inat ‘l-a`yun”[192](40:19). Other examples are the words of the verses: “fa lammā istai’asū minhu khalaśū najiyyan”[193](12:80) and: “fa idhā nazala bi sāĥatihim fa sā’a śabāĥ ‘l-mundharīn” [194](37:177)

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[187] “Move on towards the shadow of three quarters.”

[188] “And thus did We show Abraham majesty over the Heavens and the Earth. . .”

[189] “Now the truth has become manifest.”

[190] “Lawful unto is sexual relations with your partners, during night time hours of the fast.”

[191] “When it is lifted from their hearts. . .”

[192] “He knows the thievery of the eyes.”

[193] “And when they despaired of him they conferred in secret.”

[194] “And when it descends on them how hapless is the wakening of those who had been warned.”

The Oath (*‘l-Qasm*)

Here the speaker in need of an oath swears on that which does him proud, that which exalts his status, pays tribute to his worth, rebukes others, takes the form of love poetry, or a sermon on piety and self restraint. Thus in the verse: “fa wa rabbi ‘l-samā’ wa ‘l-ard innahū laĥaqq mithla mā annakum tanţiqūn”[195](51:23) the Almighty swears by that which merits pride because it exalts through power that which is greatest, most majestic, and sublime. Similarly, in the verse: “la `amruka innahum la fī sakratihim ya`mahūn”[196](15:72) the Almighty, Unblemished is He, swears by the life of His Apostle (s) in deference to his status, and his worth. In the section on oaths issues related to this will appear.

Involution and Evolution (*‘l-Laf was ‘l-Nashr*)

Here, two or more items are mentioned, either by exhaustive reference through the text, to each item, or by brief reference through a single word to multiple items, which are then referred to individually by their foregoing equivalent. The listener then has to match each object to its appropriate partner. An example of an abbreviated statement is the verse: “wa qālū lan yadkhul ‘l-jannat illā man kāna hūdan au naśārā” [197](2:111) where Jews claim that only a Jew will enter paradise and Christians, only a Christian. That this is a case of involution is corroborated by the fact that Jews and Christians, who hated each other, would have found it impossible to concede each other entering paradise! Common sense and the need to avoid confusion thus dictates that this statement be ascribed separately to the Jews of Medina and the Christians of Najrān.

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[195] ‘By the Lord of the Heaven and the Earth: It is indeed the truth, just as your speaking is.”

[196] “By your life! They blindly stumble in their drunken stupor.”

[197] “And they say: “None but a Jew or a Christian will enter Paradise.”

I maintain that an abbreviated statement may also appear in the form of an evolution and not an involution. This is where multiple things are mentioned followed by a single phrase that encompasses this multiplicity. This would be exemplified by the verse: “ĥattā yatabayyana lakum ‘l-khaiţ ‘l-abyad min ‘l-khaiţ ‘l-aswad min ‘l-fajr”[198](2:187) if one accepts Abū `Ubaida’s explanation that white thread refers not to the night, but to the false dawn. I have explained this in the work *Asrār ‘l-Tanzīl*.

Expanded phrases are of two kinds:

1-Those that are sequentially involuted, as in the verse: “ja`ala lakum ‘l-lail wa ‘l-nahār li taskunū fīhi wa li tabtaghū min fadlihī”[199](28:73) This state of restfulness refers to the night, whilst the seeking of bounties refers to the day. Another example is the verse: “wa lā taj`al yadaka maghlūlatan ilā `unuqika wa lā tabsuţhā kulla ‘l-basţ fa taq`uda malūman maĥsūran” [200](103:29) where the word *laum* (censure) refers to being stingy, and *maĥsūran* (destitution)to being extravagant. This is because the latter means being cut off, and to having nothing. Also, among the verses beginning with: “a lam yajidka yatīman. . .” etc., the verse: “Fa amma ‘l-yatīm fa lā taqhar” refers to the verse: “a lam yajidka yatīman fa ‘āwā”, whilst the verse: “wa amma ‘l-sā’il fa lā tanhar” refers to the verse: “wa wajadaka dāllan”–the reference here, as explained by Mujāhid and others, being to one who seeks knowledge; and the verse: “wa ammā bi ni`mati rabbika fa ĥaddith” refers to the verse: “wa wajadaka `āilan fa aghnā”[201] I have seen this example in Nawawī’s commentary on the work *‘l-Wasīţ* titled *‘l-Tanqīĥ*

2-Those that have their sequence reversed, as in the verse: “yauma tabyaddu wujūh wa taswaddu wujūh; fa amma alladhīna iswaddat wujūhuhum”[202](3:106) One group that included the verse:

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[198] “Until the white thread of dawn is clear to you from the black thread .

[199] “He has put in place for you the night and the day, so that you may rest therein and seek His bounties.”

[200] “And let not your hand be fettered to your neck, nor let it extend without constraints, lest you be blamed, or be destitute.”

[201] “Did We not find you a n orphan and then protected you. and found you lost, and guided you; and found you in want and made you well off. Thus, the orphan you will not wrong, and the seeker you will not spurn.

[202] “ON the day when faces will be darkened and faces will be radiant; as for those whose faces will be darkened. . .”

“ĥattā yaqūl ‘l-rasūl wa alladhīna āmanū ma`ahū matā naśr Allāh; alā inna naśr Allāh qarīb”[203](2:214) stated that: *matā naśr Allāh* refers to those who believe, whereas: *alā inna naśr Allāh qarīb* refers to the Messenger.

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[203] “. . .to the extent that the Messenger and those with him would say: ‘Where is the help of Allah? By God! the help of God is close by.”

Zamakhsharī has mentioned one other category, which is found in the verse: “wa min āyātihī manāmukum bi ‘l-lail wa ‘l-nahār wa ibtighā’ukum min fadlihī”[204](30:23) He said: “This is a form of involution which implies: *wa min āyātihī manāmukum wa ibtighā’ukum min fadlihī bi ‘l-lail wa ‘l-nahār*. Between the words *manāmukum* and *wa ibtighā’ukum* night and day have been interspersed because they are units of time. In order to maintain the oneness of the involution, time and the event transpiring therein, are treated as a single entity.

Resemblance (*‘l-Mushākalah*)

Here, an object is mentioned using the name of some other object because of proximity that is either actual, or implied. In the former category, is the verse: “ta`lamu mā fī nafsī wa lā a`lamu mā fī nafsika”[205](5:116)and the verse: “wa makarū wa makara Allāh”[206](3:54) The Creator is said to have a soul and to plot because His acts are similar to those of the other party. The same is true for the verse: “wa jazā’u sayyi’atin sayyi’atun mithluhā”[207](25:40) because the word *jazā’* is positive, and is not described as evil. Other examples are: “fa man i`tadā `alaikum fa i`tadū `alaih”[208](2:194); “‘l-yaum nansākum ka mā nasītum”[209](45:34); “fa yaskharūn minkum sakhira Allāh minhum”[210](9:79) and “innamā naĥnu mustahzi’ūn; Allāh yastahzi’u bihim”[211](2:14-15)

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[204] “And of His signs is your sleep at night and during the day; and your seeking out of His bounties.”

[205] “You know what is within me, whereas I know not what is within You.”

[206] “And they plotted and God plotted.”

[207] “And the recompense for evil is evil equal thereto.”

[208] “And as for him who is aggressive towards you: be aggressive towards him.”

[209] “This day do We forget you, just as you had Forgotten Us.”

[210] ‘And they poke fun at you; God will poke fun at them!”

[211] “We are indeed, only mocking! Allah will mock at them.”

An example of an implied resemblance is the verse: “śibghat Allāh”[212](2:138) which implies the purification from God, because faith purifies souls. The basis for this is the Christian baptismal of their children in yellow water called the Baptismal Font. They would say: “This is to purify them”. And thus faith came to be referred to as the ‘tinging of God’ because of the similarity between them.

Coupling (*‘l-Muzāwaja*)

Here, two meanings are coupled in the conditional phrase and its apodosis, or in that which takes their form. An example is the line:

No sooner did the prohibiter prohibit than passion tormented my being
No sooner had she heeded the slanderer Than separation tormented her being

The following appears in the Qur’ān: “ātaināhu āyātinā fa insalakha minhā fa atba`ahū ‘l-shaiţān fa kāna min ‘l-ghāwīn”[213](7:175)

Hyperbole (*‘l-Mubālagha*)

Here the speaker hyperbolizes certain attributes such that they exceed the meaning intended. These are of two kinds: firstly, hyperbolizing through attributes until they fall outside the realm of the possible. Examples are: “yakādu zaituhā yuđī’u wa lau lam tamsashu nār”[214](24:35) and: “wa lā yadkhulūna ‘l-jannat ĥattā yalija ‘l-jamal fī samm ‘l-khiyāţ”[215](7:40)

Secondly, hyperbolizing through word forms, such as the following: *fu`lān* as in *‘l-raĥmān; fa`īl* as in *‘l-raĥīm), fa`ā`āl* as in *‘l-tawwāb, ‘l-ghaffār* and *‘l-qahhār; fa`ūl* as in *ghafūr shakūr, and wadūd; fa`il* as in *ĥadhir, ‘ashir, fariĥ“;* and *fu`āl*, when it is not doubled, as in *`ujāb*, and when doubled, as in: *kubbār; fu`al* as in *lubad, and kubar; fu`lā* as in *‘l-`ulyā’, ‘l-ĥusnā, shūrā, and ‘l-su`ā*

Note

Most scholars are of the opinion that the *fu`lān* form is more hyperbolic than *fa`īl*, which is why *‘l-raĥmān* is considered more hyperbolic than *‘l-raĥīm*. ‘l-Suhailī corroborates this by pointing out that because the word appears in the dual form, the meaning is also intensified. It is as if the attribute is doubled when used in this particular form. But Ibn ‘l-Anbārī is of the view that *‘l-raĥīm* is more hyperbolic than *‘l-raĥmān*. Ibn `Askar supports this view because *‘l-raĥmān* comes first, and because it takes the plural form as in the word, *‘abīd*, which too, is more hyperbolic than the dual. Quţrub however, took the view that they are equally hyperbolic.

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[212] “The dye of God!”

[213] “Those We give our signs to, who then discards them. Satan then, catches up with him, and he becomes of those who stray.”

[214] “Its oil seems to illuminate without being touched by fire.”

[215] “And they shall not enter paradise, until the camel is able to go through the eye of a needle.”

Note

‘L-Burhān ‘l-Rashīdī has said that the attributes of the Almighty which appear as hyperboles do so figuratively, because while such attributes do indeed serve to hyperbolize generally, in this specific case there is no hyperbole. A hyperbole, after all, is to impute attributes to an object which are greater than the object itself, whilst the attributes of the Almighty are so infinitely perfect that they preclude being hyperbolized. Also, hyperboles occur in attributes open to increases and decreases, whereas God's attributes are absolved of such changes. This view has been approved by the master, Taqī ‘l-Dīn ‘l-Subukī

And in the work *‘l-Burhān* ‘L-Zarkashī has said that close scrutiny suggests two forms of the hyperbole: one, where the hyperbole is achieved by intensifying the act, and two, where it is achieved by multiplying the objects. No doubt, a multiplication as such, does not hyperbolize the act, for one single act may also be performed by an entire group of people. The attributes of God may be construed thus, in order to avert the foregoing criticism. Which is why some scholars have said that the hyperbole in the attribute *‘l-ĥakīm*, refers to the application of His law to multiple legal systems.

The following appears in the work *‘l-Kashshāf*.: The hyperbole in the attribute *‘l-tawwāb* alludes to His pardon of a multitude of His servants, or to His profound magnanimity when pardoning, or to His clemency which is so enormous that the sinner on being forgiven is transformed, as if he never did sin.

And in regard to the verse: “wa Allāh `alā kull shai’in qadīr”[216](2:284) one prominent scholar asked: Given that the word *qadīr* is a hyperbole, it follows therefore, that it should intensify the meaning of the word *qādir*. But this is impossible in the case of God. In cases such as this, where ascription of the hyperbole to each object would be problematic, it is instead ascribed to the collective whole to which the context points. The hyperbole is thus related to the collective whole, rather than to a particular attribute.

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[216] “And God has full control over every possible thing.”

Antithesis (*ʻl-Muţābaqa*)

Here, opposites are combined in a single sentence. It is also known as *ʻl-ţibāq*, and is of two kinds: the literal and the figurative. The latter is called Equivalence (*ʻl-takāfu’*). Each of them furthermore, is further divided into the verbal and the semantical, the positive and the negative.

Examples hereof are: “falyadĥakū qalīlan walyabkū kathīran”[217](9:82); “wa annahū huwa aďĥakū wa abkā; wa annahū huwa amāta wa aĥyā”[218](53:43); “li kailā ta’sau `alā mā fātakum wa lā tafraĥū bimā ātākum”[219](57:23); “wa taĥsabuhum aiqāźan wa hum ruqūd”[220](18:18)

Examples of the figurative are: “a wa man kāna maitan fa aĥyaynāhu”[221](6:122) that is, “He was misguided, and We set him aright.”

An example of the negative antithesis is: “ta`lamu mā fī nafsī wa lā a`lamu mā fī nafsika”[222](5:116)and the verse: “fa lā takhsha’u ‘l-nās wa ikhshauni”[223](5:44)

An example of the semantical is the verse: “in antum illā takdhibūn qālū rabbunā ya`lam innā ilaikum la mursalūn”[224](36:15,16) This means: ‘Our Lord knows that we are being truthful.” And the verse: “ja`ala lakum ‘l-ard firāshan wa ‘l-samā’a binā’an”[225](2:22) Abū ‘Alā ‘l-Fārisī said: “because the word *binā’* suggests an elevated building it is contrasted with its opposite, *firāsh*.

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[217] “Laugh then, a little, for they will weep a lot.”

[218] ‘For it is He who causes laughter, and weeping; and it is He who causes death and gives life.”

[219] “That you not despair over what eludes you, and not rejoice over what comes your way.”

[220] “And you would have considered them awake, when they were in fact sleeping.”

[221] “Is he who was dead, and who We resurrected. . .”

[222] “You know what is in me, whilst I know not what is in You.”

[223] “And be not afraid of men, but be afraid of Me.

[224] “You are no more than liars! They said: ‘Our Lord knows that we have indeed, been sent to you.”

[225] “He made the earth as a spread for you, and the sky, a canopy.’

And to this category belongs what is known as the Subtle Antithesis (*'l-Tibāq 'l-Khafiyy*) such as the verse: “min mā khaţī’ātihim ‘ughriqū fa ‘udkhilū nāran” [226](71:25) Because drowning is related to water the impression given here is that of being punished with both water and Fire. Ibn ‘l-Munqidh has said: “This is the subtlest antithesis found in the Qur’ān. Ibn ‘l-Mu`tazz has said: “One of the subtlest and most elegant examples of the antithesis is the statement of the Almighty: “wa lakum fi ‘l-qiśāś ĥayāt”[227](2:179) Because the word *qiśāś* means to kill, the impression given is that killing is in fact a source of life.

Partial Conformity (*Tarsī` 'l-Kalām*)

And to this category belongs what is known as Partial Conformity (*tarśī` 'l-kalām*) Here, one element is coupled with another such element which shares only some of its qualities. Thus in the verse: “inna laka an lā tajū`a fīhā wa lā ta`rā; wa annaka lā taźma`u fīhā wa lā taďĥā” [228](20:118,119) hunger is coupled with nakedness, although it ought to be with thirst. And similarly, sunburn is coupled with thirst, although it ought to be with nakedness. But hunger and nakedness are both equally empty: in the former case it is without food, and in the latter, without clothing. Similarly, thirst and sunburn both emit burning sensations: in the former it is the burning in the stomach, and in the latter it is the burning of the outer skin caused by the heat of the sun.

The Contrast (*'l-Muqābalat)*

And to this category belongs what is known as the Contrast (‘l-Muqābalat), where one or more words are mentioned, followed sequentially, by their opposites. Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “The Antithesis and the Contrast differ in two ways: Firstly, in the Antithesis comprising only of opposites and the Contrast comprising of between four to ten items. Secondly, in the Antithesis coupling opposites only, and the Contrast coupling both opposites, as well as other items.

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[226] “And because of their sins they were drowned and doomed to the Fire.”

[227] “And for you there is life in retribution.”

[228] “You will not need go hungry therein, or be naked; and you will not thirst therein nor will you burn.”

‘L-Sakākī has said: “Peculiar to the Contrast is juxtaposing an element in the first part with its opposite in the second. An example is the statement of the Almighty: “fa ammā man a`ţā wa ittaqā. . .”[229](92:5) were charity and stinginess are juxtaposed. Also juxtaposed are: God consciousness and self sufficiency, affirming and denying the truth, and difficulty and ease. And because the quality of ease is embodied in the first group among words signifying charity, God consciousness, and the affirmation of the truth, hardship, its opposite, is embodied in all of its opposites.

Some scholars are of the opinion that contrasts occur among single items, albeit rarely, as in the verse: “Lā ta’khudhuhū sinat wa lā naum”[230](2:255), or in twos, as in: “fal yaďĥak qalīlan walyabkū kathīran”[231](9:82); in threes, as in: “ya’muruhum bi ‘l-ma`rūf wa yanhāhum `an ‘l-munkar wa yuĥill lahum ‘l-ţayyibāt wa yuĥarrimu `alaihim ‘l-khabā’ith” [232](7:157) and “wa ‘ushkurū lī wa lā takfurūn”[233](2:152); in fours as in: “fa ammā man a`ţā. . .”[234](92:5); in fives, as in: “inna Allāh lā yastaĥyī an yadriba mathalan mā. . .”[235](2:26) (where the following words are coupled: *ba`ūďat fa mā fauqahā* and *fa ammā alladhīna āmanū; ammā alladhīna kafarū* and *yuďillu* and *yahdī*; *yanquďūn* and *mīthāqahū;*and *yaqţa`ūna* and *an yūsala*.); and sixes, as in:“zuyyina li ‘l-nās ĥubb ‘l-shahawāt. . .qul a’unabbi’ukum”[236](3:14,15) In this last verse the following words have been coupled: *‘l-jannāt*, *‘l-anhār*, *‘l-khuld*, *‘l-azwāj*, *‘l-taţhīr*, and *‘l-riďwān* and juxtaposed to: *‘l-nisā’, ‘l-banīn, ‘l-dhahab, ‘l-fiďďat, ‘l-khail ‘l-musawwama, ‘l-an`ām* and *‘l-ĥarth.*

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[229] “And as for the one who gives and is God fearing. . .”

[230] “Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes him.”

[231] “So laugh a little, and you will soon be weeping a lot.

[232] ‘He enjoins upon them good deeds, warns them against iniquity, makes lawful for them good things, and makes unlawful for them the bad things.”

[233] “And be thankful to me, and do not deny my bounties.”

[234] And as for the one who gives. . .”

[235] “And God is not embarrassed to present the parable of. . .”

[236] “Attractive to men are the pleasures of desires. . .Say! Shall I inform you. . .”

The other form of the Contrast is classified as Synonymous (Naźīrī), Antonymous (Naqīďī), and Dissimilar (Khilāfī). The first appears in the verse, “wa taĥsabuhum aiqāźan wa hum ruqūd”[237](18:18) where *ʾl-sinat* is contrasted to *ʾl-naum*, both of which imply sleep, the opposite of wakefulness This same verse serves as an example of the second category because these two terms are also contradictory. The third category is exemplified by the verse: “wa annā lā nadrī a sharr ‘urīda bi man fi ‘l-ard am arāda bihim rabbuhum rashadan”[238](72:10) where evil is contrasted with good. These two terms (*sharr* and *rashad*) are dissimilar and not antonymous, for the antonym of *ʾl-sharr* is *ʾl-khair* and of *ʾl-rushd* is *ʾl-ghayy*.

Concealment (*ʾl-Muwāribat*)

Here the speaker utters something objectionable, and when this elicits a rebuke he adroitly mitigates its effects by using devices such as word distortions, mispronunciations, additions and omissions. Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: ‘To this category belongs the statement of the Almighty “irji`ū ilā abīkum fa qūlū yā abānā inna ibnaka saraq”[239](12:81) which relates the words of Jacob’s eldest son, This verse has also been reconfigured by replacing the *fatĥa* with a *ďamma* and by doubling the *rā’* and giving it a *kasra* to read: *inna ibnaka surriqa wa lam yasriq* In this form it reflects the events as they occurred.

Recollection (*ʾl-Murāja`a*)

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[237] “You would have considered them awake, when in fact they were asleep.”

[238] ‘And we may not know whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord wishes them righteousness.”

[239] “Return to your father, and tell him: “O our Father! Your son has indeed been stolen.”

Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: ‘It is when the speaker recalls a conversation between him and a partner, using the tersest of statements, the most balanced structure, and the most elegant words. To this category belongs the statement of the Almighty: “qāla innī jā`iluka li ‘l-nās imāman; qāla wa min dhurriyyatī qāla lā yanālu `ahdī ‘l-źālimīn”[240](2:124) This statement, comprising only a part of the verse, encompasses three recollections. These include: the message and the inquiry, the command and the prohibition, the promise and the threat, in explicit and implicit forms. I maintain that it is preferable to say that the verse combines the message and the requisition, the affirmation and the negation, the emphasis and the omission, good news and a warning, and the promise and the threat.

Purity (*‘l-Nazāha*)

This is to purge the alphabet of the letters which together construct indecent language, until they fit the description of Abū `Amr b. ‘’l-`Alā’. When asked about the best form that the letters of the alphabet could take, Abū `Amr replied: “Even when uttered by a virgin in her chamber such words should not be considered indecent.”

To this category belongs the verse: “wa idhā du`ū ilā Allāh wa rasūlihī li yaĥkuma bainahum idhā farīq minhum mu`ridūn . . .a fī qulūbihim marad am iratābū am yakhāfūna an yaĥīfa Allāh `alaihim wa rasūluhuū; bal ‘ulā’ika hum ‘l-źālimūn” [241](24:48,50) The words used to rebuke those under discussion is free of all language considered indecent. The Qur’ān is uniformly like this.

Creative Styles (*‘l-Ibdā`*)

This is language that encompasses numerous forms of good style . Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` has said: “I have seen no other statement of the Almighty like the verse: “yā arď ibla`ī mā`aki. . . “ [242](11:44) It contains twenty forms of good style, and it has but seventeen letters! They include the following:

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[240] “He said: ‘I am making you a leader of men.” He said: ‘And of my progeny!” he said : ‘My covenant does not embrace the iniquitous.”

[241] “And when invited to submit to God and to His Messenger ruling among them some among them turn away. . .is there disease in their hearts, or do they doubt, or are they afraid that God and His messenger will be unjust to them? Rather, they are the unjust.”

[242] “O Earth! Swallow up your water!”

A. *‘l-Munāsabat ‘l-tāmma*, or Total Correlation, between, for instance, the words *ibla`ī* and *iqli`ī*.

B. *‘L-Isti`āra*, or Metaphor: as found in both the above terms

C. *‘L-Tibāq*, or Antithesis: between the words *‘l-arḍ’* and *‘l-samā’*.

D. *‘L-Majāz*, or Figurative language: as in the words *yā samā’* which literally, would be: *yā maţar ‘l-samā’*

E. *‘L-Ishārat*, or Allusion: as in the words *ghīḍ’ ‘l-mā’u*. This phrase expresses several ideas, because water as such does not recede until the rains from the sky stop, the earth absorbs the waters spouting from springs etc., and the waters on the face of the earth dry up. In this way the water that is collected on the face of the earth diminishes.

F. *‘L-Irdāf*, or Accompaniment, as found in the words *wa istawat*.

G. *‘L-Tamthīl*, or Similitude: as found in the words *wa quḍiya ‘l-‘amr*.

H. *‘L-Ta`līl*, or Cause: as in the words *ghīḍ ‘l-mā’u* which gives reasons why the ship came to a rest.

I. *Siĥĥat ‘l-Taqsīm*, or Proper Assortment: found in the description of the various forms of water receding. Apart from the waters of the sky, the waters that gush forth from the earth, and waters that flow on the earth, no other source of water exists that had to stop flowing.

J. *‘L-Iĥtirās fī ‘l-Du`ā’* or Circumspection in the Invocation: The invocation was circumspect, lest it give the impression that those not deserving were also included in this destruction. The Almighty’s justice requires that the innocent not be included among those cursed.

K. *Husn ‘l-Nusuq wa I’tilāf ‘l-Lafz*: This refers to the elegant and symmetrical pairing of words to meanings.

L. *‘L-Ijāz*, or Brevity: and this is because the Almighty narrated this story using the tersest of sentences.

M. *‘L-Tashīm*, or Circularity: and this is because the beginning of the verse points to its end.

N. *‘L-Tahdhīb* or Refinement: because the words used, all have good qualities. Each word is easily pronounced, is gracefully eloquent, free of ugliness and a tangled form.

O. *Husn ‘l-Bayān*, or Elegant Style: in the sense that the listener understands the meaning of the statements without hesitation, and any difficulty to comprehend.

P. *‘L-Tamkīn*, or Sound Structure: and this is because the verses are appropriately located, harmoniously contextualized, without seeming awkward, or seeking undue attention.

Q. *‘L-Insijām* or Harmony, which refers to the graceful, and pleasant declivity of the statements, using words that are stylistically pure. It resembles the graceful flow of pools of water, gently shifted by the wind.”

This is what Ibn Abū ‘l-Iśbi` had to say. I would add, that it also contains *‘l-i`tirād* or Parenthetical Statements.

A Classification of the Exegetes

Of the Companions, the following ten have gained prominence in Qur’ānic exegesis: the 4 Caliphs, `Abd Allāh b. Mas`ūd, `Abd Allāh b. `Abbās, Ubayy b. Ka`b, Zaid b. Thābit, Abū Mūsa ‘l-Ash`arī and `Abd Allāh b. Zubair.

As for the caliphs, the bulk of their transmissions are from `Alī; the others, perhaps because of their early deaths, have not quite made the same contribution. The transmissions from Abū Bakr are so few in number that I am unable to recall more than ten interpretations from him on the Qur’ān.

Much has been transmitted from `Alī, for as Ma`mar reports, from Wahb b. `Abd Allāh that Abū ‘l-Tufail said: "I was present when `Alī said in a sermon, "By God, ask me, for I am certainly able to answer all your questions. Ask me about the Book of God for I am most knowledgeable about every single verse therein. I know when it was revealed, at night or during the day, and where, on the mountains or the plains.”

Abū Nu`aim in his work *‘l-Ḥulya* quotes Ibn Mas`ūd as saying: "The Qur’ān was revealed in seven dialects each of which has an exoteric as well as an esoteric meaning, and `Alī b. Abū Tālib had full knowledge of both. Another report is from Abū Bakr b. `Ayyāsh from Nusair b. Sulaimān ‘l-Aĥmasī from his father, who heard `Alī say: "I know full well the time and the circumstances around which every single verse was revealed. My Lord has indeed, granted me an intelligent mind, and an inquiring tongue."

As for Ibn Mas`ūd, more has been narrated from him than from `Alī. Thus Ibn Jarīr and others quote him as saying, "By Him, besides Whom there is no other deity, I have full knowledge of every verse, and the time and the circumstances of its revelation. If I learnt of a place, accessible to me, where someone more knowledgeable than I lived, I would certainly seek him out." Abū Nu`aim quotes Abū ‘l-Bukhtarī as having said, "They asked `Alī: 'Tell us about Ibn Mas`ūd.' He replied, 'He studied no more than the Qur’ān and the Sunna, and that for him was sufficient."

As for Ibn `Abbās, he is the interpreter of the Qur’ān , par excellence, for whom the Prophet (s) himself had invoked the following prayer: O God! grant him understanding of the religion and teach him the interpretation of the Qur’ān!" He also prayed thus: "O God! Grant him wisdom!", and: "O God! teach him wisdom!”

Abū Nu`aim, in his work *‘l-Ḩulya* quotes Ibn `Umar as saying: "The Prophet (s) prayed for Ibn `Abbās thus: 'O God! Bless him and disperse his teachings." In addition, he narrated from `Abd ‘l-Mu'min b. Khālid from `Abd Allāh b. Buraida that Ibn `Abbās said, I got to the Prophet when Gabriel, who was also present, had this to say about me: 'He is destined to be the scholar of this community, so advise him well."

And he narrates through `Abd Allāh b. Khirāsh from ‘l-`Awwām b. Houshib from Mujāhid who quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying: "The Prophet (s) said to me, 'You are indeed the expositor of the Qur’ān , par excellence." ‘l-Baihaqī, in his work, *‘l-Dalā’il*, quotes Ibn Mas`ūd as saying "`Abd Allāh b. `Abbās is an excellent interpreter of the Qur’ān ". Abū Nu`aim narrates from Mujāhid who said: "Ibn `Abbās, because of his immense knowledge, was known as the ocean." He quotes Ibn ‘l-Ĥanafiyya as saying: "Ibn `Abbās was the religious authority of this community." He quotes ‘l-Ĥasan as saying that Ibn `Abbās' relationship with the Qur’ān was such that `Umar used to say: "As for this mature young lad, he has an inquiring tongue and an intelligent mind." He also reports, on the authority of `Abd Allāh b. Dinār that a man approached Ibn `Umar and asked about the verse: “’l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard kānatā ratqan fa fataqnāhumā” [1](21:30) He replied: 'Go and ask Ibn `Abbās, then come back and inform me.' On doing so he was told: 'The heavens were unbroken, not able to produce rain, and the earth too, unable to yield vegetation. The former was then cleaved asunder by rain, and the latter by vegetation.' The man returned to Ibn `Umar and informed him. He then said, 'I used to say that I was far from impressed by Ibn `Abbās' audacity to interpret the Qur’ān, but I now understand that he is indeed endowed with much knowledge."

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[1] ". . . the heavens and the earth were once a single entity, which we then cleaved asunder."

Bukhārī reports through Sa`īd b. Jubair from Ibn `Abbās who said: "`Umar was in the habit of including me in the company of the seniors of Badr and that displeased one into uttering: 'Why do you include this person among us; we have sons his age!' `Umar replied: 'he is of the calibre of those who taught you.'And one day he invited them and me, I believe, to prove this to them. He said, 'What is your opinion with regard to the verse: “idhā jā’a nasr Allāh wa ‘l-fatĥ”[2](110:1) Some said: 'We're being instructed to praise God and seek His absolution when He assists us and grants us victory.' Others however, remained silent, and said nothing. He then turned to me and said: “Is this what you say as well? O Ibn `Abbās ?' I said , 'No'. He then said: "What do you say?" I said: 'It portends to the Prophet(s) his own death.” He then said: the verse: 'When God’s help arrives, and with it, victory.” is a sign of your impending death.’ And “Therefore, praise your Lord and seek His forgiveness; He is indeed most forgiving.' `Umar then said: 'I know it only as you have explained.”

He also reports through Ibn Malīika from Ibn `Abbās that `Umar once said to the Companions of the Prophet (s): "In your opinion, who does the following verse apply to: “a yawaddu aĥadukum an takūna jannatun min nakhīl wa ‘a`nāb” [3](2:266) They said: “God knows best! This angered `Umar and he said: 'Either say that you do know or that you don't!' I on the other hand, did have an opinion on the matter. He then turned to me and said: 'Nephew, speak and do not sell yourself short.” I said, 'A parable symbolizing hard work is being presented.' `Umar then asked, 'What kind of work?' I said, 'The parable of a man who first works in obedience to God and is then incited by satan to indulge in evil, so much so that he ultimately ruins his good deeds.'

Ibn Nu`aim narrates from Muĥammad b. Ka`b ‘l-Qurazhi from Ibn `Abbās that `Umar b. ‘l-Khattāb was in the company of a group of “Settler Companions” (*muhājirūn)* when they began discussing the "night of power". `Umar then said, 'Why Ibn `Abbās, you haven't said a word! Speak and let not the discussion intimidate you. Ibn `Abbās said, O, Commander of the Faithful, God is Single, without partner and He loves actions that end similarly. Thus He has decreed that the rotations of the earth be seven (ending that is, in an odd number) Above us He has created seven heavens and below us seven earths. Of the divine writ He has given us seven. In His scripture He forbids marriage to seven categories of relatives, and He has distributed the inheritance therein, among seven heirs. We prostrate, in prayer, on seven parts of our bodies. The Prophet (s) circamambulated the Ka`ba, walked between Safa and Marwa, and pelted the jamarat, seven times in each case. I therefore believe that this sacred night falls in the last seven nights of the month of Ramadan. `Umar, who was amazed, said, 'No one concurs with me in this regard but this lad who has not quite matured yet.' Then he said, 'O you people! Who is able to serve me in this regard like Ibn `Abbās?'

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[2]'When God's succor comes, and victory. . . '

[3]"Would one of you like to have a garden of date-palms and vines. . . ?"

Innumerable interpretations, through various channels, have been reported from Ibn `Abbās, of which, that of `Ali b. Abū Talhah ‘l-Hāshmi is the soundest. Abū Ja`far b. Nahhās, in his work on abrogations, cites Aĥmad b. Ĥanbal as saying: "In Egypt is an exegetical work narrated by `Ali b. Talĥa; going that distance in search of it, would certainly not be too far. According to Ibn Hajr, this particular copy, which was in the possession of Abū Sālih the scribe of ‘l-Laith, the jurist, was transmitted by way of Mu`āwiya b. Sālih from `Ali b. Abū Talĥa from Ibn `Abbās. In Bukhārī's version however, the transmission is from Abū Sāliĥ. Bukhārī uses this particular manuscript a great deal with reference to traditions attributed to Ibn `Abbās. Others who do so include do Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abū Hātim, and Ibn ‘l-Mundhir, all by way of Abū Sālih. Some scholars maintain that Ibn Abū Talĥa did not hear this directly from Ibn `Abbās but from Mujāhid or Sa`īd b. Jubair. But no harm is done anyway, as Ibn Hajr maintains, because these sources are, after all, sound as well.

‘l-Khalīlī in his work, *‘l-Irshād*, says that the exegesis of Mu`āwiya b. Sāliĥ, the qādī of Andalus, taken from `Alī b. Abū Talĥa, from Ibn `Abbās, is also narrated by some senior scholars by way of Abū Sālih, ‘l-Laith's scribe, through Mu`āwiya. Hadith scholars agree that Ibn Abū Talĥa did not hear this directly from Ibn `Abbās. ‘l-Khalīlī says that lengthy exegeses, like the one attributed to Ibn `Abbās are unacceptable because the narrators are unknown. Such is the case with the exegesis of Juwaibir from ‘l-Daĥĥāk, from Ibn `Abbās.

A group of scholars have reported some questionable exegetical matter from Ibn Jurayj the longest of which is that which Bikr b. Sahl ‘l-Dimyāţi narrates from `Abd ‘l-Ghanī b. Sa`īd from Mūsā b. Muĥammad from Ibn Jurayj. And then there is the transmission of Muĥammad b. Thaur from Ibn Jurayj in some three volumes, that Ibn Hajr confirms as authentic. ‘l-Hajjāj b. Muĥammad has also narrated almost one volume of authentic material from Ibn Jurayj which is documented in the works of Bukhārī and Muslim.

The exegesis of Shibl b. `Abbād ‘l-Makkī transmitted from Ibn Abū Najīh from Mujāhid from Ibn `Abbās is almost sound. And the exegesis of `Atā' b. Dinār is both recorded and utilized as proof text. The exegesis of Abū Rauq, of approximately one chapter has also been authenticated by the scholars. As for the exegesis of Isma`īl ‘l-Suddī, it has several chains of transmission to Ibn Mas`ūd and Ibn `Abbās. ‘l-Suddī is quoted by several scholars including ‘l-Thauri and Shu`ba, but the exegesis that he compiled is narrated by Asbāţ b. Nasr, but scholars are not unanimous about him. This notwithstanding, the exegesis of ‘l-Suddi is certainly one of the finest. As for Ibn Jurayj, he was not aiming for authenticity; instead, he merely transmitted all interpretations, the sound ones as well as the weak ones, that existed on every verse. And the exegesis of Muqātil b. Sulaimān–who had contact with senior *tabi`un*,[i]–the author himself considered this exegesis weak, although ‘l-Shafi`i found it acceptable."

The exegesis of ‘l-Suddī referred to above, is often quoted by Ibn Jarīr by way of the following chains of authority: ‘l-Suddī from Abū Mālik; from Abū Sāliĥ from Ibn `Abbās; from Murra from Ibn Mas`ūd, and also from several other Companions. Abū ‘Ĥātim, because of his pre-occupation with authentic traditions, narrated nothing from ‘l-Suddī. ‘l-Ĥākim however, does narrate and authenticate some material from the former in his work, *‘l-Mustadrak,* but not from the first chain of transmission. He does so quoting Ibn Mas`ūd and some other scholars. According to Ibn Kathir, the chains of authority that ‘l-Suddī uses contains some unknown sources.

One source to Ibn `Abbās that is both sound and in compliance with the criteria of the *saĥīĥ* works, is that of Qais from `Aţā' b. Sā`ib from Sa`īd b. Jubair from Ibn `Abbās. Both ‘l-Faryābī and ‘l-Ĥākim in his work *‘l-Mustadrak*, quote this source extensively. Another sound source is that of Ibn Isĥāq from Muĥammad b. Abū Muĥammad, the free-man of the Companion, Zayd b. Thābit, from `Ikrima, or from Sa`īd b. Jubair, from Ibn `Abbās, as is, with this repetition. This is a good source with an acceptable chain of transmission that has been used extensively by both Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abū Hātim, and much of this material is found in ‘l-Ťabarānī's work, *‘l-Mu`jam*.

The most untenable source, one used extensively by ‘l-Tha`labī and ‘l-Wāĥidī, is that of ‘l-Kalbī from Abū Šāliĥ from Ibn `Abbās, and when the transmission of Muĥammad b. Marwān, ‘l-Suddī junior, is appended thereto, it becomes a chain of deceit. But Ibn `Adiyy in his work, *‘l-Kāmil* says that ‘l-Kalbī does indeed possess authentic reports, particularly those that obtain from Ibn Šāliĥ, a renowned exegete. None in fact, has an exegesis lengthier than his, nor one that is as satisfying. After him, comes the exegesis of Muqātil b. Sulaimān, except for the fact that ‘l-Kalbī is preferred over him; this because the former includes in his sources vile sects. The chain of ‘l-Daĥĥāk b. Muzāĥim from Ibn `Abbās is broken because he had not met the latter. And the report of Bishr b. `Imāra from Abū Rauq when appended thereto, is considered weak because of Bishr's weakness. This text nonetheless, has been used extensively by Ibn Juraij and Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim although both have avoided using the Juwaibir text. And even weaker are reports from Juwaibir from ‘l-Daĥĥāk, because Juwaibir is extremely weak and thus abandoned. Neither Ibn Jarīr, nor Ibn Abū Hātim report a thing using this path; those who do are Ibn Mardawaih and Ibn ‘Ĥayyān.

As for ‘l-`Aufī's report from Ibn `Abbās, it has been cited often by Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abū Ĥātim; and ‘l-`Aufī, while weak, is nonetheless, not a baseless source. In some cases, in fact, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī considered him sound. I have seen a report in the work *Fadā'il ‘l-Imām ‘l-Shāfi`ī* of Abū Abd Allāh, Muĥammad b, Shākir ‘l-Qaţţān in which the latter, using a line of transmission from Ibn Abd ‘l-Ĥakam says: 'I heard ‘l-Shāfi`ī say: 'Barring approximately a hundred traditions, nothing authentic has been reported from Ibn `Abbās regarding exegesis.

As for Ubayy b. Ka`b, several reports have been reported from him by Abū Ja`far ‘l-Rāzi from ‘l-Rabī` b. Anas from Abū ‘l-`Āliya from Ibn `Abbās. This is indeed, an authentic chain of transmitters , one which Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim cited often, as did ‘l-Ĥākim in his work *‘l-Mustadrak*, and Aĥmad in his work, *‘l-Musnad*.

Apart from the foregoing, a small amount of exegetical material from the following Companions have also been transmitted: Anas, Abū Huraira, Ibn `Umar, Jābir, and Abū Musa ‘l-Ash`arī. Also, material dealing with narratives, dissension reports, and the hereafter, have been reported by `Abd Allāh b. `Amr b. ‘l-`Ās. This is material obtained by him from the People of the Book, of which, his exegesis of the following verse is an example: “fī zhulal min ‘l-ghamām” [4](2:210) My book, mentioned heretofore, includes all that has been narrated in this regard by the Companions.

The Tābi`ūn

Ibn Taymiyya says: "Because of their friendship with Ibn `Abbās those most knowledgeable in exegesis are the people of Mecca such as Mujāhid, `Aţā’ b. Abū Rabāĥ, `Ikrimah, the freedman of Ibn `Abbās, Sa`īd b. Jubair, Ťāwūs, and others. In Kūfa, similarly, were the companions of Ibn Mas`ūd. Then there were the scholars of exegesis from Medina such as Zaid b. Aslam who was a source for his son, `Abd ‘l-Raĥmān b. Zaid and Mālik b. Anas." Of the most outstanding of these scholars is Mujāhid. ‘l-Fadl b. Maymūn said: "I heard Mujāhid say: 'I reviewed the Qur’ān in the presence of Ibn `Abbās thirty times!" And in another report: "I reviewed the Qur’ān in the presence of Ibn `Abbās thrice, stopping at each of its verses to ask him its whys and wherefores." Khusaif said that the most knowledgeable of them in exegesis was Mujāhid. And ‘l-Thaurī said: "Exegesis that comes to you from Mujāhid should suffice you." Ibn Taymiyya said: "This is why ‘l-Shāfi’ī, ‘l-Bukhārī, and others scholars depended upon his exegesis." I must say that while most of ‘l-Faryābī's citations are from Mujāhid, those from Ibn `Abbās and others are few in number.

Sa`īd b. Jubair is another outstanding scholar of exegesis, of whom Sufyān ‘l-Thaurī said: "Take exegetical material from four scholars: Sa`īd b. Jubair, Mujāhid, `Ikrima, and ‘l-Daĥĥāk." Qatāda said: "The most knowledgeable of the tabi`ūn are four: `Aţa' b. Abū Rabāha in the rituals of pilgrimage; Sa`īd b. Jubair in exegesis; `Ikrima in military campaigns; and ‘l-Ĥasan in the lawful and the prohibited."

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[4] ". . .in the shadows of the clouds. . . "

`Ikrima, the freedman of Ibn `Abbās, is another such scholar about whom ‘l-Sh`abī had this to say: "No one more knowledgeable in the Book of God than `Ikrima remains." Sammāk b. Ĥarb reports that he heard `Ikrima say: "I have explained everything between the covers of the Qur’ān ." And `Ikrima also said: "Ibn `Abbās used to fetter my feet while teaching me the Qur’ān and the sunna!" And Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports that Sammāk heard him say: "Everything I tell you about the Qur’ān is from Ibn `Abbās."

Also in this category are the following senior scholars, of whom most had received their education from the Companions: ‘l-Ĥasan ‘l-Basrī, `Aţā' b. Abū Rabaĥ, `Aţā’ b. Abū Salama ‘l-Khurasānī, Muĥammad b. Ka`b ‘l-Quradhī, Abū ‘l-`Aliya, ‘l-DaĥĥHāk b. Muzāhim, `Aţiyya ‘l-`Aufī, Qatāda, Zaid b. Aslam, Murra ‘l-Hamadāni, Abū Mālik. These are followed by: ‘l-Rabī` b. Anas and `Abd ‘l-Raĥmān b. Zaid b. Aslam.

Following this category exegetical compilations of the views of the Companions and the Tābib`ūn appeared, such as the exegesis of Sufyān ibn `Uyyana, Wakī` b. ‘l-Jarrāĥ, Shu`ba b. ‘l-Ĥajjāj, Yazid b. Harūn, `Abd ‘l-Razzāq, Adam b. Abū Iyās, Isĥāq b. Rāhawaih, Rauĥ b. `Ubāda, `Abd b. Ĥumaid, Sunaid, and Abū Bakr b. Abū Shaiba among others.

After them comes Ibn Jarīr ‘l-Ťabarī whose work is by far, the greatest and the most sublime of all, followed by Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim, Ibn Mājah, ‘l-Ĥākim, Ibn Mardawaih, Abū ‘l-Shaikh b. ‘Ĥayyān and Ibn ‘l-Mundhir. All of these works contain no more than the sayings of the Companions and the tabi`un, all that is, except for Ibn Jarīr's, which focuses as well, on categorizing the different opinions, on analyzing the grammar, and on deriving proofs. In that regard it is superior to the rest.

Hereafter many people compiled exegetical works by paraphrasing the chains of authority, or narrating mere fragments of opinion. Interpolations thus crept in, mixing sound and weak materials, and thus allowing anyone with an opinion to state his opinion. And if some thought crossed someone's mind he would give it credence while his successors recorded this believing its credibility. In so doing they did not so much as glance at the works of the pious ancestors and those generally consulted for commentaries. Thus have I found no less than ten opinions on the statement of the Almighty, “ghair ‘l-maghdūb `alaihim wa lā ‘l-dāllīn” [5](1:7) That this refers to the Jews and the Christians respectively, is explained by the Prophet (s), by the Companions, the tabi`un, and their successors, to the extent that Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim was able to say: "I know of no differences among the exegetes on this matter."

Thereafter, scholars who were experts in a particular area of study began compiling works, each in his respective area of expertise. Thus grammarians such as ‘l-Zajjāj, ‘l-Wāĥidi in his work *‘l-Basīt* and Abū ‘Ĥayyān in *‘l-Baĥr* and *‘l-Nahr* produced works on grammar, discussing therein multiple opinions pertaining to the etymology of the verses, their minutiae, and to the conflicts. Chroniclers such as ‘l-Tha`labī did no more than relate stories in exhaustive detail, or provide anecdotes, both true and false, about past personalities. Jurists such as ‘l-Qurţubī on the other hand, set forth in great detail every possible rule of fiqh, from the section on purity to that on slaves who bear their master’s children. On occasion, they even provide proofs for some legal minutiae, or against the views of an opponent that are in no way related to the verse at hand. Scholars, particularly of the ilk of ‘l-Imam Fakhr ‘l-Dīn, who excel in rational discourse often fill their commentaries with the sayings of the sages, philosophers and the like, and thus flit from one idea to another, so much so that the onlooker finds no connection between their sources and the verse in question. Ibn ‘Ĥayyān, in the work *‘l-Baĥr* said: "The fact that ‘l-Imam ‘l-Rāzī in his exegesis collected many rather lengthy, material unrelated to this science, prompted some scholars to remark that his exegesis is packed with all kinds of details except *tafsir*!

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[5] ". . . and not the path of those who have earned your anger, nor those who have gone astray."

Then there is the innovator whose only purpose is to distort verses and concoct links with his corrupt ways. Such a person avails himself of any apparent anomaly and hastens towards any spot useful to his cause. ‘l-Bulqīnī says: "I have, on close examination, found in the work *‘l-Kashshāf,* in its commentary of the following verse, a view that is of the Mu`tazilite sect : “fa man zuĥziĥa `an ‘l-nār wa ‘udkhila ‘l-jannat fa qad fāz” [6](3:185) What greater accomplishment can there be to entering Heaven! He thus implies that there will be no beholding of God.

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[6] ". . .whoever is drawn away from the fire and allowed to enter heaven. . ."

As for the heretic, pray, what is there to say about his denial of the true signs of God and his concoctions against Him. He remarks, for instance, with reference to the verse: “in hiya illā fitnatuka” [7](7:155)! that there is none more harmful to the servants of God than God himself! His views with regard to the magicians in the Moses incident are analogous to this, as are those of the Rafidites[8] in their commentary of the verse: “ya’muruka an tadhbaĥū baqarat”[9](2:67) The Prophet's (s) statement, as reported by Abū Ya`la and others, from Ĥudhaifa can only apply to such interpretations. He said: "There are people in my community who, when reciting the Qur’ān , do so as if they are separating rotten dates from good ones–they interpret the Qur’ān inappropriately." If asked what kind of exegesis should be promoted, I would reply: that of Ibn Jarīr ‘l-Ťabarī; his commentary, accorfing to all reputable scholars, is unparalleled." ‘l-Nawawi thus comments in his work *‘l-Tahzīb* that no one has compiled a book on *tafsir* comparable to Ibn Jarīr's.

I have thus embarked on the compilation of a comprehensive exegesis that addresses all aspects: that which was transmitted (*manqulāt*), as well as that which was arrived at through rational discourse (*ma`qulāt*); that which was derived(*istinbāt*) as well as that which was alluded to (*isharāt*); the etymological (*i`rāb*) as well as the dialectical (*‘l-lughāt*); the rhetorical (*‘l-balāgha)*, as well as the metaphor (*‘l-badi`*), as well as other material as would obviate recourse to any other source. I have entitled it *Majma` ‘l-Bahrain wa matla` ‘l-Badarain* and made the work at hand an introduction to it. I beseech God, in the name of Muĥammad, to help in its completion.

Thus have we come to the end of our objective in writing the present work. We conclude by relating important exegetical material, other than on the reasons for revelation, that can be ascribed to the Prophet (s). This is indeed imporatant material that wwill prove useful.

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[7] ". . . this is but a trial from You."

[8] This is a Shiite sect

[9] "God. . . orders you to sacrifice a cow. . . "

‘l-Fātiĥa

Abū ‘Ĥayyān in his *saĥīĥ* collection, Aĥmad, and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī narrate a tradition, one that the latter has deemed *hasan* from `Adi b. ‘Ĥātim that the Messenger of God (s) said: "Indeed, 'those who have earned (God's) wrath' are the Jews, and 'those who have gone astray' are the Christians"

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Abū Dharr: I asked the Prophet (s) who the words "*‘l-maghdūb `alaihim*' and '*‘l-dāllīn*' referred to. He replied that they referred to the Jews and the Christians respectively.

‘l-Baqara

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī by way of Abū ‘l-Nadrat,a tradition, which ‘l-Ĥākim also reports and authenticates, in his work, *‘l-Mustadrak*, that the Prophet (s) said, with regard to the verse: “wa lahum fīhā azwāj muţahharat” [10](2:25) that they shall be free of menstruation, feces, phlegm, and spittle. Ibn Kathir in his exegesis says that the chain of this tradition includes a certain ‘l-Bazī`ī about whom Ibn Ĥibbān says: "It is not permissible to cite him in evidence." While Ibn Kathir regards ‘l-Ĥākim's authentication of the tradition as problematic, I found that he himself, in his work on history, deems the tradition as authentic.

Ibn Jarīr, narrates a tradition from `Amr b. Qays ‘l-Malā`ī with a sound chain, in which he quotes a man form the Banu 'Umayya, one for whom he has considerable praise, as saying: "The Prophet (s) was asked: 'O, Messenger, what is `*adal*?' He replied: '`Adl is the payment of ransom." This is a sound *mursal* tradition supported by a *mauqūf* tradition from Ibn `Abbās.[11]

Bukhārī and Muslim narrate a tradition of Ibn `Abbās from the Prophet (s) who said: "The Children of Israel were told: “wa ‘udkhulu ‘l-bāb sujjadan wa qūlū ĥiţţatun”[12](2:58) They however, entered on their posteriors saying instead: 'One kernel of barley!" This in fact, is what is referred to in the verse: “qaulan ghair alladhī qīla lahum” [13](2:59)

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[10] ". . .and therein they shall have spouses pure. . ."

[11] A *mursal* tradition is one missing the first transmitter from the chain, while a *mauquf* tradition is one that goes as far back as a Companion only.

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and others have narrated a tradition with a sound chain from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that the Prophet (s) said: "'*Wail*' is a valley in hell so deep, that the disbeliever, when put therein, will sink for forty years before reaching its bottom."

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[12] '. . .And enter the gate prostrating yourself and say: 'Remove from us our sins.'

[13] ". . .they substituted another saying for that given to them.'

Aĥmad, using the same chain, narrates a tradition from Abū Sa`īd in which the Prophet (s) said: "The term *qunūt*, where it appears in the Qur’ān, refers to obedience." ‘l-Khaţīb, in a tradition with a questionable chain, narrates from Mālik from Nāfi` from Ibn `Umar from the Prophet (s), that the latter said that the verse: “yatlūnahū ĥaqqa tilāwatihī”[14](2:121) means: 'they comply with it in full'.

Ibn Mardawaih narrates a tradition wiht a weak chain from `Alī b. Abū Tālib that the Prophet (s) said in reference to the verse: “lā yanāl `ahdī ‘l-Żālimīn” [15](2:124): “obedience extends only to matters that are good.” This is substantiated by *mauquf* tradition quoted by Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim from Ibn `Abbās with the words: "The oppressor has no right over you to coerce the disobedience of God. "

Aĥmad narrates a tradition that both ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and ‘l-Ĥākim narrate and authenticate, from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī, in which the Prophet said that the verse: “wa kadhālika ja`alnākum ummatan wasaţan “[16] means a just community.

Bukhārī, Muslim and others narrate a tradition from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī from the Prophet (s) who said: "Noah will be summoned on the day of Resurrection and asked: 'Did you deliver the message?' He will say: 'Yes.' His people will then be summoned and asked: 'Did he deliver the message to you?' They will say: 'He did not bring us any warning or anything!' Noah will then be asked: 'Who will testify for you?' He will say: 'Muĥammad and his community.' The Prophet then said: "This is what is meant by the verse: “wa kadhālika ja`alnākum ummatan wasaţan.” He said: "the word *‘l-wasat* (middle most) , means *‘l-`adl* (just) You will be summoned and you will testify that he did deliver, and I will testify on your behalf." As for the words of the tradition, *‘l-wasat ‘l-`adl*, they are, as Ibn Hajr in his commentary of ‘l-Bukhārī points out, *marfu` ghair mudraj*.

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[14] "They recite it as it ought to be recited."

[15] "My covenant does not embrace the unjust"

[16] "And thus have We made you a middle-most community. . . "

Abū ‘l-Shaikh narrates a tradition as does ‘l-Dailamī in the work, *Musnad ‘l-Firdaus* by way of Juwaibir, from ‘l-Daĥĥāk, from Ibn `Abbās, that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “Fa ‘udhkurūnī adhkurukum”[17](2:152), means: 'Remember me, O servants, by being obedient to me, and I shall remember you by forgiving you."

‘l-Ťabarānī reports from Abū ‘Umāma that the strap of the Prophet's sandal broke and he recited the *istirja*`[18]. The Companions then asked: "Is this a calamity, O Messenger of God?" He replied: "Whenever something unpleasant to a Muslim afflicts him, it is a calamity." This tradition has several sources of substantiation.

Ibn Mājah and Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim narrate a tradition from ‘l-Barrā' b. `Āzib who said: "We were with the Prophet (s) in a funeral procession when he said: 'A disbeliever is struck a blow between his eyes which is heard by all beasts save the human being and the *Jinn*; every animal that hears his shout then curses him. This is what is meant by the verse: ‘Wa yal`anuhum ‘l-lā`inūn” [19](2:159) Bythis is meant the beasts of the earth.

‘l-Ťabarānī reports from Abū `Umāma that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “‘l-ĥajj ashhur ma`lumāt”[20] (2:197)refers to Shawwāl, Dhu ‘l-Qa`da and Dhu ‘l-Ĥijja.

‘l-Ťabarānī also narrates the following tradition--with an unobjectionable chain--from Ibn `Abbās, in reference to the verse: “fa lā rafatha wa lā fusūqa wa lā jidāla fi ‘l-ĥajj”[21] (2:197) in which the Prophet (s) explained that *rafath* alludes to thinking about sexual contact with the opposite sex, *fusūq* to wicked conduct, and *jidāl* to quarrels with one's companion.

Abū Dawūd reports that `Aţā' when asked about ineffectual oaths said: "`Ā’isha said that the Prophet (s) said: 'This is when a man, in his own abode, utters, By God!. . .and so on" Bukhārī reported this as a tradition (*mauqūf*) traced only as far back as `Ā`isha.

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[17] "So remember me and I shall remember you"

[18] This refers to the recitation, during times of calamity, of the verse: "Unto God do we indeed, belong and unto Him is or return"(2:156)

[19] ". . . and all those able to curse will also do so. . ."

[20] "The hajj is to be performed in the months, well known'”

[21] "Abstain from lewd speech, from wicked conduct and from quarreling (during the hajj)."

Aĥmad and others report form Abū Razīn ‘l-Asadī that a man once said: "O, Messenger of God! Where in the statement of God, "‘l-ţalāq marratān" [22] (2:229) is the third pronouncemant?" The Prophet replied: "(The statement that follows) "release her in a goodly manner" is the third."

Ibn Mardawaih reports that Anas said that a man came to the Prophet (s) and said:"O Messenger of God! God mentions *talāq* twice, where then is the third?" The Prophet (s) replied: "(It is in the conclusion of the verse which says that the marriage) must either continue with equity or (the wife should be) released in a goodly manner."

‘l-Ťabarānī reports a tradition--with an unobjectionable chain--through Ibn Lahī`a from `Amr b. Shu`aib from his father, from his grandfather that the Prophet (s) said: "The verse: ‘alladhī biyadihī `uqdat ‘l-nikāĥ" [23](2:237) refers to the husband".

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī reports, as does Ibn Ĥibbān in his *Sahīh* from Ibn Mas`ūd that the Prophet (s) said: "The *'salat ‘l-wusta'* is the `*asr* prayer."[24] Also, Aĥmad and ‘l-Tirmidhī narrate a tradition–which the latter also authenticated–from Samura, in which the Prophet (s) said: "The '*salat ‘l-wusta*' is the `*asr* prayer." And Ibn Jarīr narrates from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "The '*salat ‘l-wusta*' is the `*asr* prayer." Similarly, he reports from Abū Malik ‘l-Ash`arī that the Prophet (s) said: "The '*salat ‘l-wusta*' is the `*asr* prayer." This tradition has several other chains of authority as well as attestations.

‘l-Ťabarānī also reports from `Alī that the Prophet (s) said: "The word *‘l-sakīna* refers to a hard blowing wind." (48:4)

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[22] 'Talaq is to be pronounced twice."

[23] 'The one in whose hand is the marriage tie. . . '

[24] This is in reference to the following verse:"Be ever mindful of prayer, and particularly the middle prayer."(2:238)

Ibn Mardawaih reports a *marfu`* tradition on the authority of Juwaibir from ‘l-Daĥĥāk in which Ibn `Abbās says that the verse: “yu’tī ‘l-ĥikmat man yashā’” [25](2:269) refers to the wisdom of the Qur’ān , or to its interpretation. After all, both the good and the wicked recite it.

Āl-`Imrān

Aĥmad and others report from Abū 'Umama that the Prophet (s) said that the following verses referred to the Kharijite sect: “fa ‘amma alladhīna fī qulūbihim zaigh fa yattabi`ūna mā tashābaha minhu”[26](3:7) and “ yauma tabyaddu wujūh wa taswaddu wujūh”[27](3:106)

‘l-Ťabarānī and others report from Abū ‘l-Dardā' that the Prophet (s) when asked about the phrase: ‘’l-rāsikhūn fi ‘l-`ilm”[28](3:7) replied: "Those whose oaths are fulfilled, whose tongues are truthful, whose hearts are sound, and whose bellies and sexual organs remain pure are of those deeply rooted in knowledge."

‘l-Ĥākim reports, on the authority of Anas, a tradition, which he also authenticates, that when asked about the words of the Almighty: “wa ‘l-qanāţīr ‘l-muqanţarat”[29](3:14) said: “A *qinţar* is equal to a thousand *auqiyat*.

‘L-Ťabarānī reports–on the basis of a weak tradition–on the authority of Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said, that in the verse: “wa lahū aslama man fī ‘l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard ţau`an wa karhan” [30](3:83) “those in the Heavens” refers to the angels, and “those on earth” refers to those born Muslim. As for “those who submit unwillingly” this refers to the slaves of various communities who are unwillingly driven towards heaven in chains and shackles.

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[25] "He grants wisdom to whosoever he chooses"

[26] "As for those whose hearts are filled with misguidance, they follow the allegories of the (Qur’ān)"

[27] "(On that day) some faces will be white with happiness and others black with grief. . ."

[28] "those deeply rooted in knowledge".

[29] “Heaps of. . .”

[30] “And unto Him submit all who are in the Heavens and on earth, willingly and unwillingly.”

‘l-Ĥākim reports a tradition from Anas which he also authenticates, that the Prophet (s) when asked what the word *‘l-sabīl* meant in the verse: “man istaţā`a ilaihi sabīlan” [31](3:197) replied: "A mode of travel and travel provisions." ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī narrates a similar tradition, which he authenticates, from Ibn `Umar.

`Abd b. Ĥumaid, in his exegesis, narrates tradition from Nufai` that the Prophet (s) said with regard to the verse: “wa li Allāh `alā ‘l-nās ĥijj ‘l-bait man istaţā`a ilaihi sabīlan wa man kafara fa inna Allāh ghaniyyun `an ‘l-`ālamīn[32](3:97) A man from the Hudhail tribe stood up and asked: "O Messenger of God! Is it that one who neglects it is guilty of disbelief? He replied: "Yes, if he does so without fear of its consequences or hope of its rewards." Nufai` is a *tābi`ī* (a successor to the Companions) and the chain is thus *mursal*; but the tradition is corroborated, albeit by a *mauqūf* report from Ibn `Abbās.

‘l-Ĥākim narrates and authenticates a tradition from Ibn Mas`ūd that with regard to the verse: ittaqū Allāh ĥaqq tuqātihī” (3:102)a commentary from the Prophet (s) on the verse:[33](3:102) the Prophet (s) said: "That He be heeded and not disobeyed, and that He be remembered, and not forgotten."

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Abū Ja`far ‘l-Baqir, that on reciting the verse: “wa l-takun minkum ummat yad`ūn ilā ‘l-khair” [34](3:104) the Prophet (s) said: "*‘l-Khair* refers to obedience to the Qur’ān and to my *sunna*." This tradition is *mu`dal*.[35]

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[31]". . . all those who are able to undertake the journey"

[32]” "Pilgrimage to the sacred House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it; as for those who deny this, God is not in need of anything in the world"

[33]"Be conscious of God as befits Him "

[34]"Let there be among you a group who invites to the good."

[35]When two successive narrators or more are missing the tradition is regarded as *mu`dil*.

‘l-Dailamī in his work, *Musnad ‘l-Firdaus* quotes a tradition with a weak chain from Ibn `Umar with regard to the verse: “yaum tabyaddu wujūh wa taswaddu wujūh”[36](3:106) in which the Prophet (s) had said: "The faces of the followers of the sunna will be bright while those of the innovators will be dark."

‘l-Ťabarānī and Ibn ‘l-Mardawaih report a tradition with a weak chain from Ibn `Abbās in which the Prophet (s) said: “musawwimīn” (3: 125) [37] meant "easily identifiable" The angels during the battle of Badr, were identified by their black turbans, and during the battle of Uhud, by their red turbans.

Bukhārī narrates from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "If one fails to pay zakāt on the wealth that God hath provided, that wealth will appear in the form of a poisonous serpent with two dots above its eyes. This snake will coil around him, hold on to his jawbones and say: 'I am your wealth, your treasure!' He then recited the verse: [38] (2:180)

‘l-Nisā’

Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim narrates, as does Ibn Ĥibbān in his *saĥīĥ* from `Ā’isha that the term *ta`ūlū* in the verse, “dhālika adnā an lā ta`ūlū” [39](3:3)was explained by the Prophet (s) to mean 'tajūrū', that is, to stray. Ibn Abū ‘Ĥātim reports from `Ubayy that the above tradition is wrongly categorized; it is, correctly speaking, a *mauqūf* tradition from `Ā’isha.

‘l-Ťabarānī reports a tradition, having a weak chain, from `Umar, in which the verse: “Kullamā nadijat julūduhum baddalnāhum julūdan ghairahā”[40](4:56) is recited to Ibn `Umar. Mu`ādh then said: "I have its interpretation: the skin is changed a hundred times every hour." `Umar then said: "Thus have I heard from the Prophet (s)."

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[36] "On the day when some faces will be bright and others dark."

[37] ". . .clearly marked"

[38] "Let not those who act niggardly with what God hath provided of His bounties think that. . .

[39] "This will make it less likely that you will stray."

[40] "Every time their skins are burnt off We replace them with other skins"

‘l-Ťabarānī narrates a tradition with a weak chain from Abū Huraira in which the Prophet (s) explains that the term '*jazā`uhū*' in the verse: “ wa man yaqtul mu’minan muta`ammidan fa jazā’uhū jahannam” [41](4:93) implies: if God were to recompense him.

‘l-Ťabarānī narrates a tradition with a weak chain from Ibn Mas`ūd in which the Prophet (s) interpreted the following verse: “fa yuwaffīhim ‘ujūrahum wa yazīduhum min fadlihī” [42](4:173) to mean: "He will allow those destined for the Fire to receive intercession from those with whom their dealings were equitable in this world.”

Abū Dāwūd narrates from his *mursal* collection a tradition from Abū Salama b. `Abd ‘l-Raĥmān that a man came to the Prophet (s) and asked the meaning of the word *‘l-kalāla* He said: "Have you not heard of the verse that was revealed in the summer: “yastaftūnaka qul Allāh yuftīkum fi ‘l-kalālat”[43](4:176) Whoever dies leaving no parents or sons, his heirs are *kalāla*. This is a *mursal* tradition.

Abū ‘l-Shaikh reports in the work, *Kitāb ‘l-Farā’idh,* from ‘l-Barrā' that he asked the Prophet (s) about the word *‘l-kalāla.*He said: "Those heirs excluding the parent and the son."

‘l-Mā’ida

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that the Prophet (s) said: "If one of the Children of Israel possessed a servant, a beast of burden, and a woman, he would be considered a king." This is corroborated by Ibn Jarīr's *mursal* tradition on the authority of Zaid b. Aslam.

‘l-Ĥākim narrates and authenticates a tradition, from `Ayādh ‘l-Ash`arī who said: “When the verse: fa saufa ya’tī bi qaum yuĥibbuhum wa yuĥibbūnahū” [44](5:54) the Prophet (s), pointing to Abū Mūsa, said: "This refers to his community."

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[41] "And the requital for one who slays a Muslim intentionally is Hell."

[42] "He will give them their rewards and much more from His bounties"

[43] 'They ask you (about inheritance). Say:God informs you about *‘l-kalala*'

[44] "A people, whom God loves, and they love Him."

‘l-Ťabarānī reports from `Ā’isha, that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “Au kiswatuhum”[45](4:89) refers to each indigent receiving an outer garment.

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[45]". . .or by clothing them. . . "

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī reports and authenticates a tradition by Abū `Umayya ‘l-Sha`bānī who said: “I approached Abū Tha`laba ‘l-Khashanī and said to him:: "What do you make of this verse?" He asked: "Which verse?" I said: "The Almighty's statement: “Yā ayyuha alladhūna āmanū `alaikum anfusakum; lā yadurrukum man dalla idha ihtadaitum”[46] (5:89) He said: "By God, I did indeed ask one most knowledgeable about this: the Messenger of God (s), and he said: "Continue to enjoin the good, and to forbid evil until such time that you see niggardliness and lewdness become rampant, and the world being preferred (over the hereafter), and people becoming highly opinionated; this is when you should focus on your self and ignore people.

Aĥmad, ‘l-Ťabarānī and others report from Abū `Āmir ‘l-Ash`arī who said that he asked the Prophet (s) about the foregoing verse. He replied: "The misguidedness of the disbelievers will not harm you, if you remain guided."

‘l-An`ām

Ibn Mardawaih and Abū ‘l-Shaikh report a tradition by way of Nahshal from ‘l-Daĥĥāk, from Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said: "Every human being has an angel who removes his soul when he sleeps; if ordered by God to do so, he will withhold the soul, and if not, then he will return it to him." This is the meaning of the verse: “yatawaffākum bi ‘l-lail” [47](6:60). But Nashhal is a liar.

Aĥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, and others narrate that Ibn Mas`ūd said: "The following verse, when revealed, was troublesome to the people: “alladhīna āmanū wa lam yalbisū īmānahum bi Żulm” (6:82)[48] They therefore said: 'O Messenger of God, which one of us is not oppressive to himself!' He replied: 'It is not as you understand it; have you not paid attention to the statement of the pious servant: 'Ascribing divinity is indeed a grievous injustice!' (31:13) This refers to ascribing partners with God.

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[46] 'O You who believe! You are accountable only for yourselves. Those who go astray can do you no harm, if you are remain guided."

[47] "He it is who causes you to be (like) dead at night."

[48] Those who have attained faith, and obscure not their faith with oppression. . . '

Ibn Abū Ĥātim and others, narrate a tradition with a weak chain from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that the Prophet (s) said with regard to the verse: “lā tudrikuhū ‘l-absār”[49] (61:03) that if “ all the *jinns*, the humans, the satans, and the angels ever created were to form a single line they will still not encircle God."

‘l-Faryābī and others report a tradition on the authority of `Amr b. Murra, from Abū Ja`far that on being asked how God will open bosoms, as in the following verse: “fa man yuridi Allāh an yahdiyahu yashraĥ sadrahū li ‘l-islām” [50](61:25), the Prophet (s) replied: "By way of a light that is shone into his bosom causing it to become open and enlarged.” They then asked: "Does this event have some recognizable sign?" He said: "(Its signs are:) Seeking refuge in the abode of eternity and away from the abode of delusion, and preparing for death before its arrival” This is a *mursal* tradition supported by several sound traditions that raise its soundness to the level of *saĥīĥ* and *ĥasan*.

Ibn Mardawaih reports a tradition, as does ‘l-Naĥĥās in his work on abrogations, on the authority of Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī in which the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “wa’tū ĥaqqahū yaum ĥasādihi”[51] (6:141) refers to that which falls of the ears of the corn.

Ibn Mardawaih quotes a *mursal* tradition, by way of a weak chain, from Sa`īd b. ‘l-Musayyib in which the Prophet (s) said that the term *wus`ahā* in the verse: “wa aufū ‘l-kail wa ‘l-mīzān bi ‘l-qisţ; lā nukallifu nafsan illā wus`ahā” [52](61:52) refers to: "One who inadvertently takes more when measuring and weighing while God knows full well that his intentions were honest, will not be taken to task.”

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[49] "No human vision can encompass him."

[50] "And whosoever God wants to guide, his bosom He opens, allowing Islam to enter."

[51] "Give unto the poor their due on harvest day"

[52] "And give full measure and weight, with equity; We do not burden a human being with more than he can bear"

Aĥmad and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Sa`īd that the Prophet (s) said, that the verse: “yauma ya’tī ba`d āyāt rabbika lā yanfa`u nafsan īmānuhā”[53](61:58) refers to when the sun will be rising from its West.” This tradition, on the authority of Abū Huraira, has several chains in the saĥīĥ compendiums as well as in other works on hadith.

‘l-Ťabarānī and others quote a tradition with a sound chain from `Umar b. ‘l-Khaţţāb in which the Prophet (s) explains to `Ā’isha that the verse: “inna alladhīna farraqū dīnahum wa kānū shiya`an” [54](61:59) refers to the innovators and to those who succumb to their desires. ‘l-Ťabarānī also quotes a tradition with a sound chain from Abū Huraira in which the Prophet (s) says that the verse: “inna alladhīna farraqū dīnahum wa kānū shiya`an” [55](61:59) refers to the innovators of this community and those who succumb to their desires.

‘l-A`rāf

Ibn Mardawaih and others quote a tradition with a weak chain from Anas in which the Prophet (s) says that the verse: “khudhū zīnatakum `inda kull musjid” [56](7:31) means, "Pray in your sandals." This tradition is corroborated by one from Abū Huraira as found in the collection of Abū ‘l-Shaikh.

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[53] "On the day when some of the signs of your Lord appear, one's faith will be of no use. . ."

[54] "Indeed those who have broken the unity of their faith by becoming sects. . ."

[55] "Indeed those who have broken the unity of their faith by becoming sects. . ."

[56] "Take to your adornment during times of worship. . . "

Aĥmad, Abū Dāwūd, ‘l-Ĥākim and others report on the authority of ‘l-Barrā` b. `Āzib that the Prophet (s) mentioned the events that transpire when a disbelievers soul is removed: “It is taken up, and as it passes by the assembly of angels they say: 'What a wretched soul!' Then it reaches the first heaven and seeks permission to enter, but permission is denied." Then he went on to recite the following verse: “lā tufattaĥu lahum abwāb ‘l-samā’”[57] (7:40) The Prophet (s) then went on: "God would say: 'Record his document in the prison records of the lowest pits of hell, whence his soul shall be hurled." The Prophet (s) then recited the following verse: “wa man yushrik bi Allāh fa ka’annamā kharra min ‘l-samā’ fa takhţafuhū ‘l-ţair au tahwī bihī ‘l-rīĥ fī makān saĥīq” [58](7:31)

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Jābir b. `Abd Allāh that the Prophet (s) when asked about the fate of one whose good and evil deeds are equal in amount, said: "These are the denizens of ‘l-A`rāf." This tradition does have endorsement.

‘l-Ťabarānī , ‘l-Baihaqī, Sa`īd b. Mansūr and others report from `Abd ‘l-Raĥmān ‘l-Muzanī that the Prophet (s) , when asked about the denizens of ‘l-A`raf, said that they were people who were martyred in the path of God while being disobedient to their parents, and this impedes their entry into heaven while the former saves them from hell. This tradition is corroborated by one quoted by ‘l-Baihaqī from Abū Huraira as well as one by ‘l-Ťabarānī from Abū Sa`īd. ‘l-Baihaqi, using a weak chain, also cites another *marfu`* tradition, from Anas in which the believers from among the *jinn* are mentioned instead.

Ibn Jarīr reports from `Ā’isha that the Prophet (s) interpreted the word *‘l-ţūfān* as death.(71:33) Aĥmad, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī, and ‘l-Ĥākim quote a tradition which the latter two have deemed authentic, from Anas, with regard to the following verse: “fa lammā tajallā rabbuhū li ‘l-jabal ja`alahū dakka”[59](71:43) He said: "Thus (by bringing his thumb and index finger together) was the mountain pulverized, and Moses fell in a swoon. And Abū ‘l-Shaikh quotes the following words: "He pointed to it with his little finger, and through its light He caused it to crumble."

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[57] "The gates of heaven shall not be opened for them. . ."

[58] "Whosoever ascribes partners to God, (will be made to feel) as if he has been sent hurtling from the skies , only to be carried off by some bird or blown away by the wind."

Abū ‘l-Shaikh reports, on the authority of Ja`far b. Muĥammad from his father, from his grandfather that the Prophet (s) said: "The tablets given to Moses were from the Lotus tree in Heaven; each tablet was 12 arms-length long."

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[59] "And as soon as his Lord revealed Himself to the mountain He caused it to crumble into dust"

Aĥmad, ‘l-Nasa`ī and ‘l-Ĥākim report a tradition which the latter authenticates on the authority of Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said: "On the day of `Arafa, at Nu`man, God took a pledge from all the progeny of Adam by bringing them forth from his loins and assembling them in front of Him. He then addressed them and asked them: “a lastu bi rabbikum; qālū balā” [60](71;72) And Ibn Jarīr cites a tradition with a weak chain from Ibn `Umar that in regard to the foregoing verse the Prophet (s) said: "God assembled the progeny of Adam much as a comb does with hair of the head. He then said to them: 'Am I not your Lord! They replied: 'Indeed you are that.' The angels then said: 'We bear witness.'

Aĥmad, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī , and ‘l-Ĥākim report a tradition--which the former deemed *hasan* and the latter, *saĥīĥ*--from Samura that the Prophet (s) said: "Al Eve's children died shortly after birth, so one day after she had given birth Iblis passed by and said: 'Name him `Abd ‘l-Hārith, and he will indeed live.' That was Satan's inspiration and his command."

Ibn Abū Ĥātim and Abū ‘l-Shaikh report ‘l-Sha`bi as saying: "When the verse, “Khudh ‘l-`afwa. . .” [61] (71:99) the Prophet (s) asked Gabriel what it meant. He professed ignorance and took leave to ask God, the All-Knowing. On his return he said: "God orders you to forgive those who have acted unjustly towards you, to give even to those who withheld from you, and to maintain relations even with those who cut themselves off from you." This is a *mursal* tradition.

‘l-Anfāl

Abū ‘l- Shaikh reports from Ibn `Abbās a tradition in which the Prophet (s) was asked with regard to the verse: “Wa ‘udhkurū idh antum qalīl mustad`afūn fī ‘l-ard takhāfūn an yatakhaţţafakum ‘l-nās” [62](8:26) and the ‘people’ mentioned therein. He replied: "They are the people of Persia."

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[60] "Am I not your Lord! They said:"Indeed You are. . ."

[61] 'Accept from (man's nature) whatever is forthcoming. . . "

[62] "And recall the time when you were few in number, weak on earth, fearful that people would sweep you away"

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī reports a tradition which he deemed weak, from Abū Mūsa in which the Prophet (s) said: "God has granted my community two safeguards (as found in the following verse): “wa mā kāna Allāh li yu`adhdhibahum wa anta fīhim wa mā kāna Allāh mu`adhdhibahum wa hum yastaghfirūn” [63](8:133) Thus when I pass away I shall instruct them to seek penance till the day of resurrection."

Muslim and others report from `Uqba b. `Āmir who said: "I heard the Prophet (s) recite the following verse whilst on the pulpit: “wa ‘a`iddū lahum ma istaţa`tum min quwwatin” [64](8:60) He then said: 'This ‘strength’ is the ability to hurl spears' It appears therefore, that the most powerful and the most damaging weapon to be used against the enemy is the spear. But God knows best."

Abu ‘l-Shaikh reports on the authority of Abū ‘l-Mahdi, from his father from a person who informed him that the Prophet’s (s) said with regard to the verse: “wa ākharīn min dūnihim lā ta`lamūnahum”[65](8:60) that they are the *jinn*." A similar tradition, deemed *marfu`* is reported by ‘l-Ťabarānī from Yazīd b. `Abd Allāh b. `Arīb, from his father.

Barā̓a

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī quotes `Alī as asking the Prophet (s) about the verse: “yaum ‘l-ĥajj ‘l-akbar” [66](9:3) He replied that it was the day of the sacrifice. This is corroborated by the tradition of Ibn `Umar as found in the work of Ibn Jarīr. Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Miswar b. Makhrama that the Prophet (s) said: "This day of `Arafa is ‘the day of the greater pilgrimage’.

Aĥmad, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī , Ibn Ĥibbān, and ‘l-Ĥākim quote Abū Sa`īd as saying that the Prophet (s) said: "When you see someone frequenting the mosque then adjudge him as having faith, for God does say: “innamā ya`muru masājid Allāh man āmana bi Allāh wa ‘l-yaum ‘l-ākhir” [67](9:18)

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[63] 'God will certainly not punish them whilst you are in their midst, nor will He do so for as long as they seek forgiveness.'

[64] 'Prepare against them whatever force. . . '

[65] "And others besides them, whom you know not. . ."

[66] “The day of the great pilgrimage”

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[67]'Only he frequents God's house who believes in GOd and the Last Day'

Ibn ‘l-Mubārak quotes a tradition in the section on asceticism, as does ‘l-Baihaqī in the section on the resurrection, on the authority of `Imrān b. ‘l-Hussain and Abū Huraira, in which the Prophet (s) was asked about the verse: “wa masākina ţayyibatan fī jannāti `adn” [68](9:72) He said: "This refers to a palace of pearls, having seventy dwellings made of emeralds. Each dwelling has a bed, and each bed has seventy variegated carpets each, upon each carpet sits one a wide eyed spouse. Each chamber contains seventy tables, each table has seventy varieties of dishes. Every chamber also contains servants, one male and one female; and each day the believer will be given the nourishment that would allow him to partake of all these bounties."

Mulsim and others quote a tradition from Abū Sa`īd who said: "Two men argued about the mosque 'built on piety': one said that it referred to the mosque of the Prophet (s) whilst the other said that it referred to the mosque at Qūba'. On asking the Prophet (s) they were told: 'It refers to my mosque." Aĥmad cites a similar report from Sahl b. Sa`d and 'Ubayy b. Ka`b.

Aĥmad, Ibn Mājah, and Ibn Khuzaima report from `Uwaym b. Sā`ida ‘l-Ansārī that the Prophet (s) approached him in the mosque of Qūba' and said: "God has spoken highly of your cleanliness in the narrative about the Qūba' mosque; what exactly is this cleanliness? I can't think of anything except for the fact that we use water to cleanse ourselves (after using the toilet).' He then said: 'This is indeed it! Continue with this practice."

Ibn Jarīr reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "The word *‘l-sā'ihūn* refers to those who fast." (9:112)

Yūnus

Muslim reports from Suhaib that the Prophet (s) said that in the verse: “li alladhīna aĥsanū ‘l-ĥusna wa ziyādah” [69](10:26) the word *‘l-ĥusna* refers to heaven and *ziyādah* refers to the vision of God. And in the same chapter similar reports exist on the authority of Abū Mūsā ‘l-Ash`arī, Ka`b b. ‘l-'Ujra, Anas, and Abū Huraira.

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[68] ". . .and wonderful dwellings in gardens of eternal bliss."

[69] "For those who do good there is much good (*‘l-husna*) and more (*ziyada*)."

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Ibn `Umar from the Prophet (s) that the verse: "li alladhīna aĥsanū" means to bear witness that there is no god but God. *'l-Husna* means heaven and *ziyada* means looking at God."

Abū 'l-Shaikh and others report from Anas that the Prophet (s) interpreted the verse: "bi fadl Allāh" [70](10:58) to refer to the Qur'ān and "wa bi raĥmatihī" (10:58)[71] to refer to the fact that He made you part of it.

Ibn Mardawaih narrates from Abū Sa`īd 'l-Khudarī that a man came to the Prophet (s) and said: "My chest hurts!" The Prophet (s) replied: "Then recite the Qur'ān , for God Almighty says: "wa shifā' li mā fi 'l-sudūr" [72](10:57) This tradition is corroborated by one 'l-Baihaqī transmitted in his chapter on the parts of faith, on the authority of Wāthila b. 'l-Asqa`.

Abū Dāwūd and others report from `Umar b. 'l-Khaţţāb that the Prophet (s) said: "Of the servants of God are people who are the envy of the prophets and the martyrs!" He was asked: "Who are they, O! Messenger of God?, and he said: "Those who love each other, not because of wealth or lineage, but purely for the sake of God. They are fearless when others are filled with fear, and show no grief when others are grief stricken. Then the Prophet (s) recited the verse: "alā inna auliyā' Allāh lā khaufun `alaihim wa lā hum yaĥzanūn" [73](10:68) Ibn Mardawaih reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) on being asked about the verse: "alā inna auliyā' Allāh lā khaufun `alaihim wa lā hum yaĥzanūn" said: "They are the ones who loved each other purely for the sake of God, Almighty." A similar tradition is reported by Ibn Mardawaih on the authority of Jābir b. `Abd Allāh.

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[70] "Say! With this bounty of God. . . "

[71] "And His mercy. . . "

[72] 'And it is a remedy for what is in the chest."

[73] "Verily! those close to God need have no fear, nor should they grieve."

Aĥmad, Sa`īd b. Mansur, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī , and others report that, on being asked about the verse: “lahum ‘l-bushrā fi ‘l-ĥayāt ‘l-dunyā” [74](10:64) Abū ‘l-Dardā' said: "Since asking the Prophet (s) no one till now has asked me about this verse. He told me: “Since its revelation no one but you has asked me about it! He said:" This refers to the good dream that a believer sees, or that is shown to him; whereas this is his glad tiding for this world, for the world hereafter it will be Heaven.” This tradition is reported through various channels.

Ibn Mardawaih reports from `Ā’isha the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “illā qaum Yūnus lammā āmanū”[75] (10:98) refers to them supplicating God.

Hūd

Ibn Mardawaih, using a weak chain, reports from Ibn `Umar that when the Prophet (s) recited the verse: “li yabluwakum ayyukum aĥsanu `amal” [76] I asked him what it meant. He replied: "(It is a test to determine) who among you has the finest intellect. The best among you in intellect is certain to be most fearful of God’s ordinances; and most diligent in being obedient to God.

‘l-Ťabarānī quotes a tradition with a weak chain from Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said:"I do believe that nothing nicer than recent good deeds exist for assuaging past evil deeds and for doing so swiftly. “inna ‘l-ĥasanāt yudhhibna ‘l-sayyi’āt” [77] (11:14)

Ahmed reports from Abū Dharr that he had asked the Prophet (s) for advice and was told: "When you have indulged in some evil follow it up immediately with some good in order to efface it." I said: "O! Messenger of God! Is the invocation 'There is no god but God' included in this?" He replied: "It is of the most noble good deeds."

‘l-Ťabarānī and AS narrate from Jarīr b. `Abd Allāh a report from the Prophet (s)pertaining to the following verse: “wa mā kāna rabbuka li yuhlika ‘l-qurā bi źulm wa ahluhā musliĥūn”[78](11:117) The Prophet (s) said: "This is when its people act fairly towards each other."

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[74] "For them there are tidings of happiness in the life of this world."

[75] ". . .Except the people of Jonah. When they came to believe. . ."

[76] "In order to test you (and make clear) which of you is best in conduct."

[77] "Verily good deeds drive away evil deeds"

Yūsuf

Sa`īd b. Mansur, Abū Ya`la, ‘l-Ĥākim and ‘l-Baihaqi--in his work, *‘l-Dalā’il*--report a tradition (one that ‘l-Ĥākim authenticated) from Jābir b. `Abd Allāh in which a Jew came to the Prophet (s) and said: "O! Muĥammad! Inform me of the stars that Joseph saw pros’l-‘l-Tirmidhīating to him; what were their names
?" The Prophet (s) did not reply until Gabriel arrived and informed him. He then summoned the Jew asnd said: "Will you believe if I informed you?" The man said: "Yes." The Prophet (s) then said:"They are: Kharthan, Tariq, Dhiyal, Dhu ‘l-Kay`an, Dhu ‘l-Far`, Waththab, `Umudan, Qabis, ‘l-Daruh, ‘l-Musabbih, ‘l-Faylaq, ‘l-Diya' and ‘l-Nur. The Jew then said: "By God! These are indeed their names; as for the sun and the moon(the symbols for) his parents, he saw them on the horizon pros’l-‘l-Tirmidhīating to him." When the man narrated the story to his father, he said: "I think this is a rather confused issue which God will clarify."

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[78] "Never would your Lord destroy a community for (wrong beliefs alone) so long as its people act with propriety (towards each other)"

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Anas that the Prophet (s) said: "When Joseph said: “dhālika li ya`lam annī lam ‘akhunhu bi ‘l-ghaib”[79] (12:52) Gabriel said to him: "Joseph! Recall your temptation." At this Joseph said:[80] (13:52)

‘l-Ra`d

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and ‘l-Ĥākim report a tradition that the former deems *hasan* and the latter *saĥīĥ* from Abū Huraira from the Prophet (s) with regard to the following verse: “wa nufaddilu ba`dahā `alā ba`d fi ‘l-‘ukl”[81] (13:4) He said that it referes to low qulatiy dates, to the persian variety, to those that taste sweet and those that are sour.

Aĥmad, ‘l-Nasa'i, nad ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī narrate a tradition that the latter deemed *saĥīĥ* from Ibn `Abbās who said: "Some Jews came to the Prophet (s) and asked about the word *ra`d*. He said: "An angel appointed by God who is en’l-‘l-Tirmidhīusted with the clouds; in his hand is a whip of fire which he uses to threaten the clouds and drive them in the direction that God decrees." They then asked about the noise (thunder) that they hear, and were told: 'This is its crack.'

Ibn Mardawaih reports from `Amr b. Bijad ‘l-'Ash`ari that the Prophet (s) said: "’l-Ra`d is an angel who upbraids the clouds while lightning is the glance of an angel called Rufail.

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Jabir b. `Abd Allāh that the Prophet (s) said:"An angel en’l-‘l-Tirmidhīusted with the clouds brings together clouds that are scattered as well as those that fly high. In his hand is a whip: when he raises it, it flashes, when he upbraids with it, it thunders, and when he lashes out, it gives off a thunderbolt."

Aĥmad and Ibn Ĥibbān report from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that the Prophet (s) said: "*Tuba* is a ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīee in heaven with a span of a hundred years."

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[79] '(I asked for this so that my master would know) that I did not betray him behind his back'

[80] "I am not trying to exonerate myself!"

[81] "And some of them We have preferred over others in sustenance."

‘l-Ṭ̌abarānī reports a tradition with a weak chain, from Ibn `Umar who said: "I heard the Prophet (s) say: “yamḥ̂u Allāh mā yashā’ wa yuthbit”(13:39)[82] except happiness, sadness, life, and death." Ibn Mardawaih reports from Jabir b. `Abd Allāh b. Wathab an interpretation of the verse: 'God effaces whatever He wishes, and confirms whatever He wishes." 1339 The Prophet (s) said: "He effaces sustenance and adds to it, and affaces predetermined times (of death) and increases it." Ibn Mardawaih also reports from Ibn `Abbās taht the Prophet (s) was asked about the following verse: "God effaces or confirms whatever He wishes." He siad:"This takes place throughtout the Night of Power (*layla ‘l-qadar*); He raises, restores and sustains except in matters of happiness, grief, life, and death--these never change." Ibn Mardawaih also quotes from `Ali that he asked the Prophet (s) the meaning of the foregoing verse. He said: "I will certianly cool your eyes with its explanation, and so too the eyes of my community after me: giving charity in the right way, being obedient to one's parents, and doing good deeds will change grief to happiness and lengthen one's life.

Ibrāhīm

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Ibn Mas`ūd that the Prophet (s) said: "Whoever is given the quality of gratitude will not be denied bounties, for God does say: 'If you are thankful to Me I will certainly grant you more." 147

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[82] 'God effaces whatever He wishes, and affirms whatever He wishes.”

Aĥmad, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī, ‘l-Nasa'i, Hakim, and others report a tradition--one that ‘l-Ĥākim deems *saĥīĥ*--from Abū 'Umama in which the Prophet (s) interprets the following verse: "He shall be made to drink of the water that dis’l-‘l-Tirmidhīesses, in unceasing gulps. . ." The Prophet (s) said: "When presented to him he will dislike it, and when brought closer it will scald him such that his scalp will fall off. When he drinks of it his stomach will tear and pass through his anus. For God, Almighty, does say: “wa suqū ma’an ĥamīman fa qaţţa`a am`ā’ahum”[83] (47:15) And He also says: “wa in yastaghīthū yughāthū bi mā’in ka ‘l-muhl yashwī ‘l-wujūh”[84](18:29)

Ibn Abū Ĥātim , ‘l-Ťabarānī and Ibn Mardawaih report from Ka`b b. Malik a *marfu`* exegesis which the latter thought explained the following verse: “Sawā’un `alainā ‘a jai`nā am sabarnā mā lanā min maĥīs” [85](14:21) The Prophet (s) said: "The denizens of the Fire shall say: 'Come let us endure with patience.' This they will do for five hundred years until they realize that it does them no good. Then they say: "Let's mourn'. And they do for five hundred years, but when they realize that it does them no good, they say: "It is all one, we think, whether we suffer impatiently or do so with forbearance."(14:21)

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī, ‘l-Nasa'i, ‘l-Ĥākim, Ibn Ĥibbān, and others report from Anas the Prophet (s) commentary of the Following verses: “mathalan kalimatan ţayyibatan ka shajaratin ţayyibatin” [86]1424 and “wa mathalu kalimatin khabīthatin ka shajaratin khabītahinin" [87](14:27). The Prophet (s) said that the former was a date ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīee and the latter like a Colocynth ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīee. Aĥmad, and Ibn Mardawaih narrate a report with a sound chain from Ibn `Umar that the Prophet (s) said regarding the "good ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīee", that it was a date ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīee, a ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīee that did not shed its leaves.

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[83] "They would be given waters, boiling hot, that will tear their bowels asunder."

[84] "And when they ask for liquids, they will be given water, hot like (molten) lead, which will scald their faces"

[85] "It is all one, we think, whether we suffer impatiently, or do so with forbearance; for us, there is no escape!"

[86] "The similitude of a good word is like a good tree. . ."

[87] the similitude of a corrupt word is like a corrupt tree. . ."

All six scholars report from ‘l-Barra' b. `Azib that the Prophet (s) said: "A Muslim, when questioned in the grave will reply: 'I bear witness that there is no god but God, and I bear witness that Muĥammad is the messenger of God.' This is what is meant by the verse: “yuthabbitu Allāh alladhīna āmanū bi ‘l-qaul ‘l-thābit fī ‘l-Ĥayāt ‘l-dunyā wa fī ‘l-ākhirat” [88](14:27)

Muslim reports from Thaubān that a Jewish rabbi came to the Prophet (s) and asked: "Where will people be on the day when the earth is turned inside out?' He replied:"They will be in darkness, away from the place of resurrection." Muslim, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī, Ibn Maja, and others report that `Ā’isha said:"I was the first person the ask the Prophet (s) about the following verse: “yaum tubaddalu ‘l-ard ghair ‘l-‘ard” [89](14:48) I said: "Where will people be on that day?" He said: "On the *sirat*."[90]

‘l-Ťabarānī reports in his work *‘l-Ausat*, as do ‘l-Bazzar, Ibn Mardawaih, and ‘l-Baihaqi in the section on the resurrection from Ibn Mas`ūd   a commentary from the Prophet (s) of the following verse: “yaum tubaddalu ‘l-ard ghair ‘l-‘ard” He said: "This will be a white earth as if made of silver; no blood shall have been spilled on it on any wrong done on it."

‘l-Hijr

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[88] 'God strengthens those who believe with the strong word in this life as well as in the one to come.'

[89] 'The day when this earth is replaced by another. . . '

[90] This refers to abridge that extends over Hell over which all people will cross.

‘l-Ťabarānī, Ibn Mardawaih, Ibn Hibbān report from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that he was asked: "Have you heard anything from the Prophet (s) on the verse: “rubamā yawaddu alladhīna kafarū lau kānū muslimīn”[91](15:2) Yes, I heard him say: "God will remove some of the believers from the Fire after having taken His re’l-‘l-Tirmidhīibution from them.. Whilst still in Hell, these people will have been asked by the polytheists: 'You claimed that you were the friends of God! Why then, are you here with us in the Fire! On hearing this God shall solicit intercessions on their behalf. Angels, prophets and believers will then intercede, with God's permission, on their behalf, until they leave. When the polytheist see this they will say: 'Alas! If only we were like them; intercession would also have been done for us, and we would have left with them.' This therefore, is what is referred to by the verse: “rubamā yawaddu alladhīna kafarū lau kānū muslimīn” (15:2) This is corroborated by the traditions of Abū Musa ‘l-'Ash`ari, Jabir b. `Abd Allāh, and `Ali.

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Anas a commentary from the Prophet (s) on the following verse: “li kulli bāb minhum juz’un maqsūm” [92](15:44)1 The Prophet (s) said: "Some shall (enter these gates for) having ascribed partners with God, others, for having doubted Him, and others still, for having been unmindful of Him."

Bukhārī and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "The seven oft-repeated verses' and the 'sublime Qur’ān ' are actually the 'mother of the Qur’ān ".

‘l-Ťabarānī reports in his work, *‘l-'Ausat* from Ibn `Abbās that a man asked the Prophet (s) about the verse: “ka mā anzalnā `ala ‘l-muqtasimīn”[93](15:90) He said that these were the Jews and the Christians. He was then asked what the word *`idīn* in the following verse: “alladhīna ja`alū ‘l-Qur’ān `idīn”[94] referred to, and he replied: “ them believing in some parts and denying others.”

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[91] "(A time will come when) those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims.”

[92] "Each gate will receive its allotted share of sinners."

[93] "As We revealed to those who broke it up into parts. . ."

[94] “Those who pronounce this Qur’ān false.”

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abū Ĥātim, and Ibn Mardawaih report that with regard to the verse: fa wa rabbika la nas’alannahum ajma`īn; `ammā kānū ya`malūn” [95](15:92) the Prophet (s) said that they shall be asked about the statement: "There is no god but God"

‘l-Naĥl

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[95] "By your Lord! We shall indeed call every one of them to account for what they've done"

Ibn Mardawaih reports from ‘l-Barrā' that the Prophet (s) when asked about the verse: “zidnāhum `adhāban fauq ‘l-`adhāb”[96](16:88) explained: "This will be through scorpions resembling the spathes of palm trees in length and these will tear them to pieces in hell."

‘l-Isrā'

‘l-Baihaqī, in his work, *‘l-Dalā'il*, reports from Sa`īd ‘l-Muqburiyy that `Abd Allāh b. Salām asked the Prophet (s) about the dark patches in the moon. He replied:"These were previously two suns. As God tells us: “wa ja`alnā ‘l-lail wa ‘l-nahār āyatain fa maĥaunā āyat ‘l-lail”[97](17:12) The dark blotch that you see is the effacement."

‘l-Ĥākim reports in his work on history, as does ‘l-Dailamī from Jābir b. `Abd Allāh that the Prophet (s) said that the ‘dignity’ referred to in the verse: “wa laqad karramnā banī Ādam”[98](17:70) pertains to them eating with their fingers."

Ibn Mardawaih reports from `Ali that with regard to the verse: “yauma nad`ū kulla ‘unās bi imāmihim” [99](17:71) the Prophet (s) said: "Every community will be summoned through their leaders and the scriptures of their Lord."

Ibn Mardawaih reports from `Umar b. ‘l-Khaţţāb that the Prophet (s) said that (*dulūk*) in the verse: “aqim ‘l-salāt li dulūk ‘l-shams”[100](17:71) refers to when the sun passes the zenith.

‘l-Bazzār reports a tradition from Ibn `Umar as does Ibn Mardawaih, using a weak chain, in which the Prophet (s) said: "*Dulūk ‘l-shams*" is when the sun passes its zenith."

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī reports a tradition--one that he deemed *saĥīĥ*--as does ‘l-Nasa'ī, from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said about the verse: “inna Qur’ān ‘l-fajr kāna mashhūdan” [101](17:78) that it is the angels of night and day who bear witness to it.

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[96] "We shall heap suffering upon suffering on them."

[97] 'And We made night and day two signs; and thereupon We effaced the sign of night. . .'

[98] "We have indeed dignified the children of Adam."

[99] "One day We shall summon all people by (addressing) their leaders."

[100] "Be constant in the prayer that is performed after the sun has passed its zenith."

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[101] "The recitation at dawn is indeed witnessed"

Aĥmad and others report from Abū Huraira that with regard to the verse: “`asā an yab`athaka rabbuka maqāman maĥmūdan”[102](17:79) the Prophet (s) said: "This position is one where I intercede for my community." In one tradition the words are: "This is intercession." This tradition has several chains, long ones and short ones, in the *sihah* compendiums as well as in other works.

The *Shaikhān*, (Bukhārī and Muslim) and others report from Anas that the Prophet (s) was asked: "How will people be assembled on their faces?" He said: "The One who got them to walk on their legs certainly has the power to get them to walk on their faces!"

‘l-Kahf

Aĥmad and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that the Prophet (s) said: "The awning *(suradiq*) of the Fire has four walls, and the thickness of each one is equal to the distance of walking for forty years." They also report the Prophet (s) as saying that the water in the verse: “bi mā’ ka ‘l-muhl” [103](18:29) will be l”ike turbid oil whose heat will cause the skin to peel off."

Aĥmad also reports from the Prophet (s) that the verse: “wa ‘l-bāqiyāt ‘l-sāliĥāt”[104](18:46) refers to the recitation of the following liturgies: *‘l-takbīr*, *‘l-tahlīl*, *‘l-tasbīĥ*, *‘l-ĥamd lillāh*, and *la ĥaul wa lā quwwata illa bi Allāh*. Aĥmad also reports a *marfū`* tradition on the authority of ‘l-Nu`mān b. Bashīr in which the same verse is said to refer to the recital of the following liturgies: "*subĥān Allāh, wa ‘l-ĥamd lillah, a la ilāha illa Allāh wa Allāh akbar*. ‘l-Ťabarānī reports a similar tradition on the authority of Sa`d b. Junāda. Ibn Jarīr also reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said that this refers to: "*Subĥān Allāh, wa ‘l-ĥamd lillāh, wa lā ilāha illa Allāh wa Allāh akbar.* are “the goods deeds that endure."

Aĥmad reports from Abū Sa`īd that the Prophet (s) said: “The disbeliever will be persecuted for a period equal to fifty thousand years kin a manner quite unlike any task he may have performed in the world. And the disbeliever will be looking at Hell thinking that he is about to fall into it, from a distance equal to 40 years of travel.” {Alternative translation: "A disbeliever shall be will overcome with calamity for fifty thousand years as if he had done no good whatsoever whilst on earth and he shall envision Hell for forty years believing all the while that he is on the verge of plunging therein."}

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[102] "Your Lord may well raise you to a praiseworthy position."

[103] "(They will be given) water hot like molten lead."

[104] ". . . the goods deeds that endure."

‘l-Bazzār reports a *marfū`* tradition with a weak chain on the authority of Abū Dharr that the Prophet (s) said: "The chest that God mentions in His scripture is a tablet made of gold. I am astonished at the one who believes that God determines one’s fate, and yet earns His wrath, and at one who does ponder over the Fire and yet, is able to be merry, and at one who does ponder over death and yet, remains oblivious to the fact that there is no god but God and that Muĥammad is the Messenger of God."

The Shaykhān report, on the authority of Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "When beseeching God do so by asking Him for *‘l-Firdaus*; it is the loftiest part of Heaven, as well as its center; from it all the rivers of Heaven flow."

Maryam

‘l-Ťabarānī reports, using a weak chain, on the authority of `Umar, that the Prophet (s) said: "The 'sariyy' that God speaks to Mary of in the verse: “qad ja`ala rabbuka sariyya” [105](19:24) is a river that He provides her with to drink from."

Muslim and others report from Shu`ba who said: "The Prophet (s) sent me to Najrān, and the people there said: 'Why do you recite “Yā ukht hārūn!” (19:28)[106]when in fact, Moses preceded Jesus by several years?' On returning to the Prophet (s) I told him of this, and he said:" Why did you not inform them that the Children of Israel customarily named their children after their prophets and their virtuous ancestors."

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[105] 'God has provided a rivulet (sariyy) beneath you'

[106] 'O! sister of Aaron'

Aĥmad and the Shaikhān report form Abū Sa`īd that the Prophet (s) said: "When the denizens of Heaven shall enter therein and the denizens of Hell shall enter Hell, death will be brought forward in the form of a fat ram, and placed between heaven and hell. It will then be said: “O! denizens of Heaven! "Do you know this? He said: 'They will raise their gazes, look, and say:'Yes, this is death.' An order will then be given to slaughter death. Thereafter, it will be said: 'O People of Heaven! Your stay is eternal; there will be no death.' and "O People of Hell! Your stay too is sternal; there will be no death." Then the Prophet (s) recited: “wa andhirum yaum ‘l-ĥasrat idh qudiya ‘l-`amr; wa hum fī ghaflat” [107](19:39) The Prophet (s) then indicated with his hand that people in this world remain heedless.

Ibn Jarīr reports from Abū 'Umama that the Prophet (s) said: "*Gayy* and *'Athām* are wells in the depths of Hell, through which the pus of the people of the Fire flows." Ibn Kathir however, said that this tradition is rejected.

Aĥmad reports from Abū Sumayya: “We argued about the word the *wurūd*: whilst some said that "No believer shall enter it", others maintained that: "All shall enter it; then God will save those who were fearful of Him." On meeting Jābir b. `Abd Allāh, I asked him, and he told me: 'I heard the Prophet (s) say: 'Every righteous and unrighteous person without exception will enter it. But for the believer it will be cool and peaceful as it had been for Abraham. This in fact will prompt Hell to complain about the cold. Then God will save those who were fearful of Him and leave the evildoers therein, on their knees."

Muslim and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "If God loves someone Gabriel (is asked to) proclaim: 'I love so and so now therefore, love him too. And then the love descends to the earth for the benefit of that person. This is the meaning of the verse: “Sa yaj`alu lahum ‘l-raĥmān wuddan” [108](19:96)

Ťāha

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[107] "Warn them of the day of regrets, when everything will have been decided, and they will be heedless."

[108] "God will endow them with Love"

Ibn Ĥibbān and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Jundub b. `Abd Allāh that the Prophet (s) said: "If you come upon a sorcerer, kill him. He then recited the verse: “wa lā yufliĥu ‘l-sāĥir haithu atā” [109](20:69) He said: 'Wherever he may be, he will find no peace."

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[109] "A sorcerer can never come to any good."

‘l-Bazzār reports a tradition with a sound chain from the Prophet (s) in which he says that the verse: “fa inna lahū ma`īshatan dankan” [110](20:124) refers to the punishment of the grave.

‘l-'Anbiyā’

Aĥmad reports from Abū Huraira who said: I said: "O Messenger of God! "Tell me about the meaning of "everything"? He said: 'Everything' is created from water."[111]

‘l-Ĥajj

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Ya`la b. 'Umayya that the Prophet (s) said: "Hoarding food in the city of Mecca is heresy."

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī reports a tradition which he deemed *hasan*, from Ibn ‘l-Zubair who said that the Prophet (s) said:: "It (the Ka`ba) is called the "Free House" because no tyrant was able to control it."

Aĥmad reports from Khuraym b. Fātik ‘l-'Asadī that the Prophet (s) said: "False testimony has been made equal to ascribing partners with God." Then he recited the verse: “fa ijtanibū ‘l-rijsa min ‘l-authān wa ijtanibū qaul ‘l-zūr”[112](22:30)

‘l-Mu'minūn

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Murra ‘l-Bahzī who said: "I heard the Prophet (s) say to a man: 'You will die at Rabwa, and so he died at ‘l-Ramlat. ' Ibn Kathīr said that the tradition is quite strange.

Aĥmad reports from `Ā’isha that with regard to the verse: “ wa alladhīna yu’tauna mā atau wa qulūbuhum wajilat”[113](23:60) sheasked the Prophet (s) if "this referred to a person who steals, fornicates, consumes intoxicants and yet remains fearful of God? He replied: 'No! O Daughter of ‘l-Siddīq! "Rather, it refers to one who fasts, prays, gives charity, and remains fearful of God."

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[110] "His life shall be one of dire straits.”

[111] This is a reference to the verse: "And from water We created every living thing."2130

[112] "Shun the loathsome practice of idola’l-‘l-Tirmidhīy and shun too, all false speech."

[113] "And those who give what they are supposed to give, and their hearts ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīemble. . . "

Aĥmad and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Sa`īd that with regard to the verse: “wa hum fīhā kāliĥūn” [114](23:104) the Prophet said: 'The fire will roast him causing his upper lips to shrivel up to the middle of his head, and the lower would droop to his navel."

‘l-Nūr

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Abū Sūra b. Akhu Abū-'Ayyub that he said to the Prophet (s) : " O Messenger fo God! I know what '*salam*' is, but what is "l-'*isti'nās*'? He replied: 'That a man invoke praises to God when speaking, that he glorify and extol Him, and that he say 'ahem' to seek permission before entering a dwelling."[115]

‘l-Furqān

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Yahya b. Abū Sa`īd a *marfū`* tradition wherein the Prophet (s) is asked about the verse: “wa idhā ‘ulqū minhā makānan dayyiqan muqarranīn”[116](25:13) He said: "By Him in whose hands is my life! They will surely be flung into the fire, against their will, much like a peg is driven into a wall."

‘l-Qasas

‘l-Bazzār reports from Abū Dharr that the Prophet (s), when asked which of the two periods Moses completed, said: "The period that was more complete and more pious." He then said: "If asked which of the two women he married, say: 'The younger of them." While the chain of this tradition is weak, it nonetheless, is supported by other complete, as well as *mursal* traditions.

‘l-`Ankabūt

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[114] "They will grin therein with lips contorted."

[115] This is a reference to the verse: "O Ye who Believe! Ewnter not dwellings ohter thwan your own until you have sought permission (*ista'nasu*) and sent greetings to its members. . . "2427

[116] ". . .and when they are flung, linked together, into a tight space. . . "

Aĥmad and others report from Umm Hāni’ a tradition that ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī deemed *hasan*, in which she says: "I asked the Prophet (s) about the verse: “Wa ta’tūna fī nādīkum ‘l-munkar”[117](29:29) and he said: 'They would harass people on the streets, and mock them. This was the vile deed that they perpetrated.'

Luqmān

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and others report a tradition with a weak chain from Abū 'Umāma that the Prophet (s) said: "Neither sell songstresses nor yet purchase, or teach them (this profession); there is no good in trading in them, and such earnings are prohibited. It is in this regard that the following verse was revealed: “wa min ‘l-nās man yashtarī lahwa ‘l-ĥadīth li yudill `an sabīl Allāh”[118](3:16)

‘l-Sajda

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Ibn `Abbās, that the Prophet (s) said with regard to the verse: “aĥsana kulla shay’in khalqahū”[119](7:32) that “while the behind of a monkey may not be pretty, it has nonetheless, been created with great wisdom."

Ibn Jarīr reports from Mu`ādh b. Jabal that the Prophet (s) said with regard to the verse: “tatajāfā junūbahum `an ‘l-madāji`i” [120](32:16) refers to “the servant (of God) awakening at night (to pray)."

‘l-Ťabarānī reports from Ibn `Abbās, that with regard to the verse: “wa ja`alnāhu hudan li banī Isrā’īl”[121](32:23) the Prophet said that it refers to Him making Moses a source of guidance to the Children of Israel. And with regard to the verse: “fa lā takun fī miryat min liqā’ihī”[122] he said that it refers to Moses meeting his Lord.

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[117] 'And you perpe’l-‘l-Tirmidhīate these vile deeds in your public spaces. . . '

[118] "And among people there are those who ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīade in idle banter so as to mislead from the path of God"

[119] "He who makes excellent everything He creates."

[120] "Whose sides restlessly rise from sleep"

[121] "And We made him (Moses) a source of guidance for the Children of Israel."

[122] "Be not in doubt about meeting Him."

‘l-'Aĥzāb

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī reports from Mu`āwiya who said: "I heard the Prophet (s) say: 'Ťalĥa is among those ‘who sacrificed their lives.'

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and others report from `Amr b. Abū Salama, as do Ibn Jarīr, and others, also from Umm Salama, that when the verse: “innamā yurīd Allāh li yudhhiba `ankum ‘l-rijsa ahl ‘l-bait wa yuţahhirakum taţhīran”[123](33:33) the Prophet (s) summoned Fāţima, `Alī, Ĥasan, and Ĥussain.

Saba`

Aĥmad and others report from Ibn `Abbās that a man asked the Prophet (s) about whether "Saba'" was male, female, or some land? He replied: "Rather, it refers to a man who had ten children, six of whom lived in Yemen and four in Syria."

Bukhārī reports a *marfū`* tradition which states: "When God decrees a matter in the heavens angels, out of fear, flap their wings noisily, like chains battering rocks. After their fear has dissipated they proclaim: 'What is it that your Lord hath decreed! The Truth! He is indeed, Lofty and Great."

Fāţir

Aĥmad and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that in regard to the verse: “thumma aurathnā ‘l-kitāb alladhīna isţafainā min `ibādinā; fa minhum Żālim li nafsihī wa minhum muqtasid; wa minhum sābiq bi ‘l-khairāt”[124] (35:32)the Prophet (s) said: All these people are on the same level; all of them are in Heaven”

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[123] "God only wants to remove from you all that is loathsome, O People (of the Prophet (s)) household."

[124] "And thus have We vouchsafed this divine scripture as a heritage to those We choose from among Our servants. And among them some do injustice to themselves, others are half way between good and evil, and others still, outdo others in deeds of goodness." He said: "All three of them are in the same position; all three will go to heaven."

Aĥmad and others report from Abū ‘l-Dardā' who said: "I heard the Messenger of God (s) say with regard to the verse: “thumma aurathnā ‘l-kitāb alladhīna isţafainā min `ibādinā; fa minhum Żālim li nafsihī wa minhum muqtasid; wa minhum sābiq bi ‘l-khairāt”[125](35:34) that those: "who outdo others in deeds of goodness, shall enter heaven without reckoning, those who are half way between good and evil shall have a light reckoning, and those who do injustice to themselves, shall remain in captivity throughout the period of Reckoning.” Thereafter, God, through His mercy will redress their situation, whereupon they will proclaim: “‘l-ĥamd li Allāh alladhī ‘adhhaba `annā ‘l-ĥuzn”[126](35:34)

‘l-Ťabarānī and Ibn Jarīr report from Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said: "On the Day of Judgement a call will be made: 'Where are those who are in their sixties?' This is the age that God speaks of in the verse: “‘a wa lam nu`ammirkum mā yatadhakkar fīhi man tadhakkara”[127](35:37)

Yā Sīn

The Shaikhān report from Abū Dharr who said: I asked the Prophet about the verse: “wa ‘l-shams tajrī li mustaqarr lahā”[128](36:38) and he said that it this is its predetermined course underneath the Throne. They also report him saying: "I was with the Prophet (s) in the mosque at sunset when he said: 'O Abū Dharr! Do you know where the sun sets. I replied:: 'God and His Messenger know best.' He said: 'It continues until it prostrates under the Throne. And this is alluded to in the verse: “wa ‘l-shams tajrī li mustaqarr lahā”

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[125] "And thus have We vouchsafed this divine scripture as a heritage to those we choose from among Our servants. And among them some do injustice to themselves, others are half way between good and evil, and others still, outdo others in deeds of goodness."

[126] 'Praise God who removed from us this sorrow.”

[127] 'Did We not grant you a life with time enough to become conscious.'

[128] "I asked the Prophet (s) about the verse: 'And the sun runs its predetermined course.'

‘l-Saffāt

Ibn Jarīr reports from Umm Salama that she asked the Prophet (s) about the verse: “wa ĥūr `ain” [129](37:49) and he said: 'This is the one who has large eyes. And the eyelashes of the maidens in heaven are like the wings of the eagle.” I said::' Tell me about God's statement: “ka’annahunna baid maknūn”[130](37:49) He said: 'Their tenderness is like that of the membrane underneath the shell of the egg." The word *shufr* should be read with a *fā’* as the governed noun of the word *‘l-haurā'*. The latter are the eyelashes. Though this is self evident, one still finds, in this era, neglectful people who write it with a *qāf*. They then say that in the foregoing statement *‘l-haurā' mithl janah ‘l-nathr,* is the subject, and *fi ‘l-sur`at wa ‘l-khiffat* is the predicate. This then means that the maidens of heaven are like eagles in swiftness and speed--an interpretation that is patently false and ignorant, it is a heresy in religion, and a show of insolence towards God and the Prophet (s).

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and others report from Samura that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “wa ja`alnā dhurriyatahā hum ‘l-bāqīn”[131](37:77) referred to Hām, Sām and Yāfith. And through a different source he is reported to have said: "Sām is the ancestor of the Arabs, Hām of the Abyssinians, and Yāfith of the Romans. And he reports from 'Ubayy b. Ka`b that on asking the Prophet (s) about the verse: “wa arsalnā ilā mi’at alf au yazīdūn”[132] he was told: “They exceeded twenty thousand.”

Ibn `Asākir reports from `Alā' b. Sa`d that the Prophet (s) once said to those seated alongside him:: "The sky complains, and rightly so, for it is filled to capacity with angels who prostrate and bow." He then recited the verse: “wa innā la naĥnū ‘l-sāffūn;

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[129] "O Messenger of God! Tell me about the 'companions with lus’l-‘l-Tirmidhīous eyes'

[130] 'as if they are the concealed eggs (of the ostrich)

[131] "And We caused his offspring to endure on earth."

[132] "And We sent him to a hundred thousand or more."

wa innā lanaĥnū ‘l-musabbiĥūn”[133](37:165)

‘l-Zumar

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[133] "We too, stand in rows before Him; we too, glorify Him."

Abū Ya`la and Ibn Abū Ĥātim report from `Uthmān b. `Affān that he asked the Prophet (s) the meaning of the verse: “lahū maqālīd ‘l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard”[134](39:63), and was told: “No one before you asked me about this! It refers to the following supplication: "There is no god but God, who is the greatest." And: "Praise God! and glorify Him! I seek the forgiveness of God. There is no might, no power besides God. He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward, to Him belongs all good; He gives life and causes to die. This tradition is strange and highly objectionable.

Ibn Abū ‘l-Dunya reports on the authority of Abū Huraira, that when the Prophet asked Gabriel about the verse: “fa sa`iqa man fi ‘l-samāwāt wa man fi ‘l-ard illā man shā`a Allāh”[135](39:68) and which creatures will be exempt from falling down senseless: He replied: "They are the martyrs."

Ghāfir

Aĥmad, Asĥāb ‘l-Sunan, ‘l-Ĥākim and Ibn Ĥibbān report from Nu`mān b. Bashīr that the Prophet (s) said: "Supplication is indeed the foremost form of worship." Then he recited the verse: “ud`ūnī astajiblakum; inna alladhīna yastakbirūna `an `ibādatī sa yadkhulūna jahannam dākhirīn”[136](40: 60)

Fussilat

‘l-Nasa'ī, ‘l-Bazzār, Abū Ya`la and others report from Anas that the Prophet (s) recited the following verse to them: “inna alladhīna qālū rabbuna Allāh thumma istaqāmū”[137](41:30) He then said: "Some people had uttered it and then most of them apostatized; thus whoever continues to utter it until he dies will be of those who remain firm on it.”

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[134] "To Him belong the keys to the heavens and the earth."

[135] "(The ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhīumpet will be sounded) and all creatures in heaven and on earth will fall down senseless except such as God exempts."

[136] "Call Me and I shall respond; verily those too proud to worship Me shall enter hell, abased."

[137] "Indeed those who say: 'My lord is God and then remain firm. . .'

Shūrā

Aĥmad and others report that `Alī said: "Should I inform you of the loftiest verse in the Qur’ān , as told to us by the Prophet (s) ? He then recited: “wa mā asābakum min musībat fa bimā kasabat aidīkum; wa ya`fū `an kathīr” [138](42:30) The Prophet (s) said: "I shall explain it to you O `Ali. Whatever illness, punishment or calamity befalls you on this earth it is a consequence of your action. God is above having to punish you a second time in the life to come. As for that which He overlooks in this world: God is far too benevolent to revoke His amnesty.”

‘l-Zukhruf

Aĥmad, ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and others report from Abū 'Umāma that the Prophet (s) said: "No community, once rightly guided, has ever gone astray except those that resorted to bickering." He then recited the verse: “mā darabūhu laka illā jadalan; bal hum qaum khasimūn”[139](43:58)

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "Every denizen of hell will look, with regret, at the place (he failed to attain) in heaven and then he will say: “lau anna Allāh hadānī la kuntu min ‘l-muttaqīn”[140] And every denizen of Heaven will look at the place (he was saved from) and he will say: “wa mā kunnā li nahtadiya lau lā an hadāna Allāh” [141](43:43) For this he will be thankful. The Prophet (s) also said: "Every being has a place in Heaven as well as in the Fire: the disbeliever inherits the believer’s place in hell and the believer inherits the disbeliever’s place in Heaven. This is the meaning of the verse: “wa tilka ‘l-jannat allatī ‘ūrithtumūhā bimā kuntum ta`lamūn”[142](43:72)

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[138] "Whatever calamity befalls you is a consequence of your own doings, although He does overlook a great deal."

[139] 'They put this to you only to make argument; they are indeed, belligerent people.'

[140] 'If only God had guided me I would certainly have been of the God-fearing.'

[141] "We would certainly not have been guided if God had not done so."

[142] "Such is the paradise which you shall have inherited because of your past

‘l-Dukhān

‘l-Ťabarānī and Ibn Jarīr narrate a tradition with a sound chain from Abū Malik ‘l-'Ash`arī that the Prophet (s) said: "Your Lord has warned by way of three things: the smoke which will overcome a believer like the common Cold and inflate the disbeliever to the extent the it will ooze out of each of his ears. The second thing is the wild beast and the third, the Anti-Christ. This tradition is corroborated by others.

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deeds."

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī, Abū Ya`la and Ibn Abū Ĥātim report from Anas that the Prophet (s) said: "Every servant of God has two doors in Heaven, one through which his good deeds and words enter and the other through which his sustenance exits; when he dies they miss him and shed tears for him." He then recited the following verse: “fa mā bakat `alaihim ‘l-samā’ wa ‘l-ard” [143](44:29) He then pointed out that the latter, whilst still on earth, did nothing worthwhile to cause them (The skies and the earth) to shed tears for them; thus no good words or actions made their way up to heaven, and there was therefore no feeling of loss, nor any remorse at their loss.

Ibn Jarīr reports a *mursal* tradition from Shuraiĥ b. `Ubaid ‘l-Ĥadramī that the Prophet (s) said: "Any believer who dies in exile, far removed from those who would have shed tears over his passage, will have the sky and the earth shed those tears." He then recited the verse:“fa mā bakat `alaihim ‘l-samā’ wa ‘l-ard” [144]He then said that the sky and the earth weep not over the death of a disbeliever.

‘l-'Aĥqāf

Aĥmad reports from Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “au athāratin min `ilm”[145](46:40) referred to script.

‘l-Fatĥ

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[143] "And neither sky nor earth shed tears for them."

[144] 'And neither sky nor earth shed tears over him."

[145] "(Bring me) any other piece of knowledge"

‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī and Ibn Jarīr report from 'Ubayy b. Ka`b that he heard the Prophet (s) say that the verse: “wa alzamahum kalimat ‘l-taqwa”[146](49:26) refers to the invocation: 'There is no god but God."

‘l-Ĥujarāt

Abū Dāwūd and ‘l-‘l-Tirmidhī report from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) was asked: "O Messenger of God! What is back biting?" He said: "To say things about your brother that he dislikes." It was said: "What if my brother fits the description!" He said: "If indeed he does then you are guilty of backbiting, and if not, then you have slandered him.”

Qāf

Bukhārī reports from Anas that the Prophet (s) said: "Countless people will be thrown into the Fire but its only refrain will be: 'Are there more! God will then put His foot in at which the Fire will say: 'Enough! Enough!

‘l-Zāriyāt

‘L-Bazzār reports from `Umar that the verse: “wa ‘l-dhāriyāt dharwan” refers to the winds; “fa ‘l-jāriyāt yusran” refers to the ships; and “fa ‘l-muqassimāt ‘amran”[147](51:1,3,4) refers to the angels.” If not for hearing this from the Prophet (s) I would not have mentioned it.”

‘L-Ťūr

In the appendix to the work, *‘l-Musnad* `Abd Allāh b. Aĥmad (b. Ĥanbal) quotes `Alī as saying: The Messenger of God said: “Believers along with their progeny will be in Heaven, and Disbelievers along with their progeny will be in Hell Fire.” The Messenger of God then recited the verse: “wa alladhīna āmanū wa ittaba`athum dhurriyyatuhum bi īmān alĥaqnā bihim dhurriyyatahum.” [148](52:21)

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[146] "And bound them to words of god-consciousness"

[147] “By the winds that scatter dust. . .by the ships that float so easily, and by the angels that distribute provisions.”

[148] “As for those who believe, and whose progeny follows them in belief, We join

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their progeny to them.”

Ibn Jarīr reports, as does Ibn Abū Ĥātim by way of a weak chain, on the authority of Abū ‘Umāma that on reciting the verse: “wa Ibrāhīm alladhī waffā” [149](53:37) the Prophet (s) asked: “Do you know what he fulfilled?” I said: “God and His Messenger know best” He said: “He fulfilled his daily duties by performing four prayer cycles (*raka`āt*) at the beginning of the day.”

And these two narrators also report form Mu`ādh b. Anas that the Prophet (s) said: ‘Must I tell you why God called His friend “the one who fulfilled”? It is because he in the mornings and the evenings: “fa subĥān Allāh ĥīna tumsūn wa ĥīna tusbiĥūn” [150](30:17)

And ‘l-Baghawī reports, on the authority of ‘Ubayy b. Ka`b that with regard to the verse: “wa anna ilā rabbika ‘l-muntahā” [151](53:42) the Porphet (s) said: “There should not be any deep thopught about the essence of God.” ‘L-Baghawī said: “This is similar to the tradition that states: “Ponder over the creation of God, and ponder not over the essence of God.”

‘L-Raĥmān

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports on the authority of Abū ‘l-Dardā’ that with regard to the verse: “kulla yaum huwa fī sha’n”[152] (55:29) the Prophet (s) said: “It is part of His glory to pardon some sin, to alleviate some plight, to raise one community, and to humble another.” Ibn Jarīr reports a similar tradition on the authority of `Abd Allāh b. Munīb. ‘l-Bazzār too, reports such a tradition on the authority Ibn `Umar.

The Shaikhān report on the authority of Abū Mūsā ‘l-Ash`arī that the Prophet (s) said: “There are two gardens of silver, including the utensils and everything else therein, and two gardens of gold, including the utensils and everything else therein.”

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[149] “And of Abraham who fulfilled. . .”

[150] “So glorify God when you come upon the evening and when you come upon the morning.”

[151] “And that it is unto your Lord that is the culmination.”

[152] “Ever day He is in full glory”

‘L-Baghawī reports on the authority of Anas b. Mālik that on reciting the verse: “hal jazā’ ‘l-iĥsān illa ‘l-iĥsān” [153] (55:60) the Prophet (s) said: “Do you know what your Lord has said?” They replied: “God and His Messenger know best.” He said: “He says: Can the reward for one whom I have favored with belief in the Oneness of God be anything but paradise.”

‘L-Wāqi`a

Abū Bakr ‘l-Najjād reports from Salīm b. `Āmir that a bedouin approached and asked: “O Messenger of God! God mentions a tree in Heaven that would do harm to a person. What is is? He said: It is the Lotus tree, which has harmful thorns.” The Messenger of God (s) then recited the verse: “fī sidr maqhdūd” [154](56:28) and said: “God cut off its thorns and replaced each one with a fruit.” This is corroborated by a tradition of `Utba b. `Abd ‘l-Sulamī that is reported by Abū Dāwūd in the section on resurrection.

The Shaikhān report on the authority of Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: “In Heaven is a tree under whose shade a traveler may journey for a hundred years without passing through. If you’d like, read the verse: “wa Żill mamdūd” [155](56:34)

‘l-Tirmidhī and ‘l-Nasa’ī report on the authority of Abū Sa`īd ‘l-Khudarī that with regard to the verse: “wa furush marfū’at” [156](56:34) the Prophet (s) said: “Their height equals the distance between the Heavens and the earth, and it would take five hundred years to cover it.”

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[153] “Can the requital for virtue be any thing but virtue.”

[154] “Among thornless Lotus trees.”

[155] “In a lengthy shade.”

[156] “On couches raised high.”

'L-'l-Tirmidhī reports on the authority of Anas that with regard to the verse: "innā ansha'nāhunna inshā'an" [157](56:35-37) the Prophet (s) said: "This refers to old women who were bleary eyed on earth." And in his work *'l-Shamā'il* he reports on the authority of Hasan who said: "An old woman came and asked: 'O messenger of God! Implore God that He grant me entry into Heaven." He replied: "O mother of so and so! An old woman will not enter Paradise." She turned away, crying." He then said: "Tell her that she will not enter as an old woman, for God says: "innā ansha'nāhunna inshā'an; fa ja`alnāhunna abkāran `uruban atrāban" [158](56:35-27) Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports on the authority of Ja`far b. Muĥammad from his father, from his father, who said: "The Messenger of God (s) said: "the word *`urub* refers to them speaking Arabic."

'L-Ťabarānī reports from Umm Salama that she said: "O Messenger of God! Tell me about the statement of the Almighty: "wa ĥūr `īn" [159](56:22)." He said: "*ĥūr* refers to whiteness, and *`īn* to the largeness of the eyes, with eyebrows like the wings of an eagle." I said: "Tell me about the statement of the Almighty: "ka amthāl lu'lu' 'l-maknūn" [160] (56:22)" He said: "Their purity is comparable to that of a pearl that is untouched because it is covered by an oyster." I said: "Tell me about the verse: "fīhinna khairāt ĥisān" [161] (55:70)" He said: "The word *khairāt* refers to their character, and *isān* to their countenance." I said: "Tell me about the verse: "ka annahunna baid maknūn" [162](37:49)" He said: "They are as delicate as the membrane one sees inside the egg just below the shell" I said: "Tell me about the verse: "`uruban atrāban" [163](56:27)" He said:

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[157] "We have turned them into maidens of special creation."

[158] "We have indeed, turned them into maidens of special creation; and We have made them virgins, (along with other persons) of equal age."

[159] "Wide eyed maidens"

[160] "Like preserved pearls"

[161] "Therein reside wholesome, and beautiful (spouses)

[162] "(pure and delicate) like concealed eggs."

[163] " We have made them virgins, (along with other persons) of equal age."

“When raised from the abode of this world they were old, bleary eyed, and grey haired. God resurrects them afterwards as young virgins. The word `*uruban* refers to them becoming objects of passion and love, while *atrāban* refers to them having the same age.”

Ibn Jarīr reports on the authority of Ibn `Abbās that with regard to the verse: “thullat min awwalīn wa thullat min ‘l-ākhirīn” [164](56:39-40)” The Messenger of God (s) said: “They will all be of my community.”

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[164] “Many of those in the first generation, and many of those in the latter generation.”

Aĥmad and ‘l-Tirmidhī from `Alī that the Messenger of God (s) said that the verse: “wa taj`alūn rizqakum” refers to your gratitude and the verse: “annakum tukadhdhibūn” [165](56:82) refers to them saying: ‘our rains are due to such and such winds.”

‘L-Mumtaĥina

‘l-Tirmidhī reports a tradition which he also authenticates, on the authority of Umm Salama that with regard to the verse: “wa lā ya`sīnaka fī ma`rūf” [166](60:12) the Prophet (s) said: “That is wailing”

‘l-Ťalāq

The shaikhān report from Ibn `Umar that he had divorced his wife whilst she was pregnant. `Umar related this to the Prophet (s) whereupon he was angered, and said: “Let him take her back, and hold on to her until she is cleansed of her menses. Thereafter, is he so chooses then he may divorce her in her state of purity, but before having sex with her. This is the time frame within which God has instructed that women be divorced. The Messenger of God (s) then recited the verse: “idhā ţallaqtum ‘l-nisā’ fa ţalliqūhunna li `iddatihinna” [167](65:1)

‘l-Nūn

‘L-Ťabarānī reports on the authority of Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said: “The first things that God created were the Pen and the fish. He then said: “Write!” It replied: “What shall I write?” He said: “Everything that will occur till the Day of Resurrection.” Then the Prophet (s) recited: “Nūn wa ‘l-qalam. . .” (68:1) The word *nūn* refers to the fish, and *qalam* refers to the Pen.”

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[165] “And instead of being grateful you impute the source of your sustenance to false causes.”

[166] “And that they not disobey in that which is right.”

[167] “When divorcing women do so in accordance with their periods.

Ibn Jarīr reports from Mu`āwiya b. Qurrat who reports from his father, that with regard to the verse: “Nūn! Wa ‘l-qalam wa mā yasţurūn” [168](68:1) the Prophet (s) said: The tablet is made of Light, and so too is the Pen made of light; it flows with information pertaining to everything that will occur till the Day of Resurrection.” Ibn Kathīr said that this tradition is *mursal, gharīb.* He also quotes Zaid b. Thābit as saying that the Messenger of God said: “The Sky weeps for that servant whose physique God had restored, whose belly He kept expanded (with food), and to whom he gave enormous amounts of this world. But he was unjust with people, and it is in reference to him that the words *'l-`utul 'l-zanīm* are used.” This is a *mursal* tradition that is corroborated by others.

Abū Ya`la and Ibn Jarīr report a tradition with some unknown narrators, from `Abū Mūsā that with regard to the verse: “yauma yukshafu `an sāq”[169](68:42) the Prophet (s) said: "This refers to a bright light towards which they shall fall, prostrate.

Sa'ala

Aĥmad reports from `Abū Sa`īd that the Prophet (s) was asked how long the day in the following verse would be: “fī yaum kāna miqdāruhū khamsīn alf sanat”[170] (70:4) He said: "By Him in whose hands is my life! This day will be made effortless on the believer so much so that to him it would seem easier than the prescribed prayers that he performs in the world”

'l-Muzzammil

‘l-Ťabarānī reports from Ibn `Abbās that with regard to the verse: “fa iqra’ū mā tayassara minhu”[171] (73:20) the Prophet (s) said: “A hundred verses.” Ibn Kathīr said that this tradition was extremely strange.

‘l-Muddaththir

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[168] “Nūn! By the Pen and all that they write.”

[169] "On the day when the calf shall be laid bare. . ."

[170] "On a day whose length shall be greater than a thousand years."

[171] "Recite as much as you are able to.”

Aĥmad and ‘l-Tirmidhī report from `Abū Sa`īd that the Prophet (s) said: "’l-Sa`ūd is a mountain of fire that one will climb for seventy years before plunging off it for just as long.

Aĥmad, ‘l-Nasa’ī and ‘l-Tirmidhī report a tradition that the latter deemed authenticated, from Anas that on reciting the verse: “Huwa ahl ‘l-taqwa wa ahl ‘l-maghfirat”[172] (74:56)the Prophet (s) said: "Your Lord says: 'I alone am worthy of being held in awe; therefore, ascribe not other gods as partners to Me. Whoever fears ascribing partners towith Me is worthy of My forgiveness."

`Amma

‘l-Bazzār reports from Ibn `Umar that the Prophet (s): "None shall leave the Fire until he's spent several *ahqābs* therein: each *ĥuqub* comprises of eighty odd years, and each of those years equals three hundred and sixty of your days."

‘l-Takwīr

Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports from Buraid b. `Abū Maryam who reports from his father that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “Idhā ‘l-shams kuwwirat”[173] refers to it being covered by Hell. And he said that the verse: “wa idhā ‘l-nujūm inkadarat” [174] (81:1-2) refers to them falling into Hell. He also reports from Nu`mān b. Bashīr that with regard to the verse: “wa idhā ‘l-nufūs zuwwijat” [175](81:7) the Prophet (s) said: "Every man will be coupled with the community whose acts he indulged in."

Infiţār

Ibn Jarīr and ‘l-Ťabarānī report a tradition with a weak chain by way of Mūsa b. `Alī b. Rabāĥ from his father, from his grandfather, that the Prophet (s) said: "What will be born to you?" He said: "Nothing yet, but it can only be a male or a female!" He said : "Who will it resemble?" He said: "Who but his mother or his father?" So the Prophet (s) said: "Stop! Don't speak that way! When the sperm settles in the womb God brings it face to face with its ascendants right through to Adam. Have you not recited the verse: “fī ayyi sūrat mā shā’a rakkabak” [176](82:8) This means that He formed you according to His will."

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[172] "He alone should be held in awe, and He alone is capable of forgiving."

[173] "When the sun is covered in darkness"

[174] "When the stars fall and lose their light."

[175] "And when all human beings are coupled."

Ibn `Asākir in his work on history reports from Ibn `Umar that the Prophet (s) said: "Indeed, they were named 'the reverent ones' only because of their kind treatment of their parents and their children."

l-Muṭaffifīn

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[176] "In whatever form He so willed you to have. . ."

The Shaikhān report from Ibn `Umar that with regard to the verse: "yauma yaqūm ʻl-nās li rabb ʻl-`ālamīn"[177](83:6) the Prophet (s) said that this refers to "when one among them will be immersed in his sweat halfway to his earlobes."

Aĥmad, ʻl-Tirmidhī, ʻl-Nasa'ī, and ʻl-Hākim report a tradition which the latter deemed *sahih*, from Ibn `Abbās and Abū Huraira, that the Prophet (s): "When the servant of God sins it creates a black speck on his heart; and if he repents his heart shines. But if he persists in sinning it engulfs his whole heart, as is alluded to in the verse: "Kallā bal rāna `alā qulūbihim mā kānū yaksibūn"[178](83:14)

ʻl-Inshiqāq

Aĥmad, the Shaikhān, and others report from `Ā'isha that the Prophet (s) said: "Every person who's reckoning is queried will be punished." She said: "But does God not say: [179] (84:8) He said: "That is not the real reckoning: it is no more than a review."

Aĥmad also reports that Ā'isha said: "I said: "O Messenger of God! What is meant by this 'light reckoning'?' He said: "It is when his book is examined and his sins overlooked. But one whose records are queried, on that day, will indeed be punished.'

ʻl-Burūj

Ibn Jarīr reports from Abū Mālik ʻl-Ash`arī that the Prophet (s) said:"*ʻl-yaum ʻl-mau`ūd"* is the Day of Resurrection, the '*shāhid*' is Friday, and the *'mashhūd*' is the "Day of `*Arafah*." This tradition is corroborated.

ʻl-Ťabarānī reports from Ibn `Abbās that the Prophet (s) said: "God created the Divine Tablet with white pearl, its pages are of red rubies, His pen is of light, and its script is luminous. God Almighty, peruses it 360 times daily to create, to sustain, to give and to take life, to honor and to dishonor, and to do whatever He wishes."

Sabbaĥa

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[177] "On the day when all men shall stand in front of the Lord of the worlds."

[178] 'Indeed, that which they have earned has covered their hearts with rust."

[179] "He will be called to reckon, with an easy reckoning."

‘l-Bazzār reports from Jābir b. `Abd Allāh, that the Prophet (s) that the verse: “qad aflaĥa man zakkāhā”[180] (87:14) refers to "one who bears witness that there is no other deity but God, renounces the notion of Him having any partners, and bears witness that I am the Messenger of God." As for the verse: “wa dhakara isma rabbihī fa sallā” [181] (87:15) he said, refers to the five daily prayers, guarding them, and paying special attention to them."

‘l-Bazzār reports that Ibn `Abbās said: "When the verse: “inna hādha la fī ‘l-suĥuf ‘l-‘ūlā”[182](87:18) was revealed, the Prophet (s) said: 'This was--or all of this was--in the scriptures of Abraham and Moses."

‘l-Fajr

Aĥmad and ‘l-Nasa’ī report from Jābir that the Prophet (s) said: "By '`*ashr*' is meant the ten days of the `Eid of ‘l-Adĥā, by *'watr*' is meant the day of `Arafa, and by *'‘l-shaf`*`' is meant the day of sacrifice." Ibn Kathīr said: 'The narrators of this tradition are okay, but there is a problem designating it a *'marfu`*' tradition" Ibn Jarīr reports a *marfu*` tradition on the authority of Jābir, that says: "*‘l-shaf`*` refers to two days, and *‘l-watr* is the third day."

Aĥmad and ‘l-Tirmidhī report from `Imrān b. Husain that the Prophet (s) was asked about the words *'‘l-shaf`* and *'‘l-watr*'. He replied: "These are the daily prayers; some end in twos and some in ones."

‘l-Balad

Aĥmad reports from ‘l-Barrā' that a man came to the Prophet (s) and said: "Teach me a deed that will grant me paradise." The Prophet (s) said: "Free a soul and liberate a slave." He asked: "Are they then not the same?" The Prophet (s) replied: "Freeing a soul is to do so yourself and liberating a slave is to assist in the act."

‘l-Shams

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[180] "Successful is he who attains to purity."

[181] "He who remembers the name of his Lord and offers prayer"

[182] 'This indeed is in the previous scriptures'

Ibn Abū Hātim reports on the authority of Juwaibir from ‘l-Daĥĥāk, from Ibn `Abbās who said: "With regard to the verse: “qad aflaĥa man zakkāhā” [183](91:9)I heard the Messenger of God say: "Successful is the soul that God Almighty purifies.”

Alam Nashraĥ

Abū Ya`la reports, as does Ibn Hibbān in his work, *‘l-Sahih* from `Abū Sa`id that the Prophet (s) said: "Gabriel came to me and said: Your Lord says: 'Do you know how I raised your praises? I said: "God alone knows." He said: "Whenever I am remembered so too will you be along with Me."

‘l-Zalzala

Aĥmad reports from `Abbās Huraira that the Prophet (s) recited the following verse: “yauma’idhin tuĥaddithu akhbārahā” [184] (99:4), then said: 'Do you know what those past events are?" They said: "God and His Messenger know best." He said: "It will testify to the deeds performed on it by every servant, male and female; it will say that they did this and that on such and such day."

‘l-`Ādiyāt

Ibn Abū Hātim reports a tradition with a weak chain from `Abū 'Umāma that the Prophet (s) said that the word *‘l-kunūd* in the verse: “Inna ‘l-insān li rabbihī la kanūd” [185] (10:06) refers to one who “ eats alone, beats his slave and denies him food."

Alhākum

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[183] 'Successful is the one who purifies (the soul)'

[184] "On that day it will recount its past events."

[185] "To his Lord man is indeed, verily ungrateful."

Ibn Abū Hātim reports from Zaid b. Aslam a *mursal* tradition that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “alhākum ‘l-takāthur”[186](102:2) refers to obedience. And the verse: “ĥattā zurtum ‘l-maqābir”[187] means: “until death comes to you."

Aĥmad reports from Jābir b. `Abd Allāh that the Prophet (s), Abū Bakr and `Umar ate some ripe dates and drank some water. Thereafter, the Prophet (s) said: "These are the bounties about which you shall be interrogated.

Ibn Abū Hātim reports from Ibn Mas`ūd that with regard to the verse: “thumma la tus’alunna yauma’idhin `an ‘l-na`īm” [188](10:28) the Prophet (s) said that you will be asked about peace and good health.

‘l-Humaza

Ibn Mardawaih reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) explained the verse: “innahā `alaihim mu’sadat” [189] (10:48) to mean that the fire will smother them.

Ara'aita

Ibn Jarīr, and Abū Ya`lā report from Sa`d b. Abū Waqqās who said: “I asked the Prophet (s) about the verse: “alladhīna hum `an salātihim sāhūn”[190] (107:5) and he said: “They are the one’s who delay their prayers beyond their appointed times.”

‘L-Kauthar

Aĥmad and Muslim report from Anas that the Prophet (s) said: "*‘l-Kauthar* is a river in heaven given to me by my Lord." This tradition is corroborated by several others.

‘l-Nasr

Aĥmad reports from Ibn `Abbās that when the verse: “idh jā’a nasr Allāh wa l-fatĥ”[191] (110:1) the Prophet (s) said: "News of my death has come to me."

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[186] “Your obsessive greed will divert you.”

[187] “Until you finally go to the graves.”

[188] "On that day you will certainly be asked about the bounties."

[189] "It will close in upon them."

[190] “Those who are unmindful in their prayers.”

‘l-Ikhlās

Ibn Jarīr reports from Buraida a tradition that I know only to be *marfu`,* in which he says: "*Samad* is one who has no belly."

‘l-Falaq

Ibn Jarīr reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said: "*Falaq* is a concealed well in Hell." Ibn Kathīr said that this is a strange tradition whose inclusion in the *raf`* category is incorrect.

Aĥmad and ‘l-Tirmidhī report a tradition from Ā’isha that ‘l-Nasa’ī also reports and deems *sahih,* in which she said: "The Prophet (s) took my hand and showed me the moon as it rose and he said: "Take refuge in God from the evil of this, this darkness when it descends."

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[191] “When the help of God comes, and victory along with it.”

Ibn Jarīr reports from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (s) said that the verse: “wa min sharr ghāsiq idhā waqab”[192] (113:4) refers to the star that heralds the darkness. Ibn Kathīr said that it is incorrect to regard this tradition as *marfū`*.

'l-Nās

Abū Ya`la reports from Anas that the Prophet (s) said:" Satan puts his snout on the chest of the son of Adam; if the latter remembers God it remains still, but if he becomes unmindful then it swallows his heart. This is what is meant by the 'whispering tempter'.

These then, are the traditions that reached me: they include those clearly labeled *marfū`, saĥīĥ*, *ĥasan*, *da'īf*, *mursal*, and *mu`dil.* I have not however, depended on false and fabricated traditions.

In this category there are also three rather lengthy *marfu`* traditions that I have not quoted. The first of them, reported in the *saĥīĥ* of Bukhārī, is the story of Moses and Khidr. It includes a commentary on the *'l-kahf* chapter. The second, a lengthy tradition on civil strife covering almost half a chapter, includes a commentary on the Moses story, and on several verses related to it. It is narrated by, among others, ‘l-Nasa’ī, but the scholars (*huffaz*) including ‘l-Mizzī and Ibn Kathīr have brought attention to the fact that this tradition is, at best, *mauquf*, that is, it can go no farther back than to Ibn `Abbās. *Marfu`* traditions on this topic are few, but they do attribute the tradition to the Prophet (s) himself. But Ibn Kathīr suggests that Ibn `Abbās may have acquired this tradition from Jewish sources. The third tradition on the blowing of the bugle (on the Last Day) is longer still, than the civil strife tradition. It includes descriptions on the conditions of the Last Day and in general, explanations on a variety of verses and chapters. Ibn Jarīr and ‘l-Baihaqī report this tradition in the section on the Resurrection. Abū Ya`la quotes the same tradition on the authority of Isma`il b. Rāfi`, the chief justice of the city of Medina. Because of this narrator, scholars have voiced their reservations about this tradition. Also, some part of the tradition's text is rejected. Some say that he had taken it from several sources, and places, and compiled them into a single text.

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[192] "And from the evil of the darkness when it descends."

As mentioned previously, Ibn Taymiyya and others, have stated that the Prophet (s) had in fact explained the entire Qurān or much thereof, to his Companions. This is supported by the tradition narrated by Aĥmad and Ibn Mājah that `Umar said: "Of the last verses revealed was the verse on *riba*; the Prophet (s) however, was taken away before being able to explain it." This statement suggests that the Prophet (s) was in fact in the habit of explaining all that which was revealed, his sudden death however, prevented him from explaining this particular verse. If this was not the case then the mention of the verse on *riba* specifically would be meaningless.

As for ‘l-Bazzār's report from Ā’isha, it is, as Ibn Kathīr point out, unacceptable. She said: "The Prophet (s) did not interpret anything in the Qurān except some verses, which he learnt from Gabriel." Ibn Jarīr and others interpreted this to refer to specific verses that were unknown to him. He asked God for their meanings which God then communicated to him through Gabriel.

And God Almighty has been gracious enough to grant me the ability to complete the task of writing this book, which would otherwise have remained unachievable. It is a work that is incomparably wonderful, unsurpassable, with an arrangement that excels a string of pearls, a work that encompasses such benefits as remained unavailable anywhere in the past. I have included therein, helpful principles for understanding the revealed scripture, and explained structures that allows noble creatures to reach their goals thereby. I have also included perspectives that help its sealed treasures.

Herein is the essence of reason, the fountainhead of revelation, and only the most authentic of all acceptable opinions. I have distilled in it the books of knowledge in their variety, gone to countless gardens of exegesis and plucked from them their fruit and blossoms, plunged into the oceans of the scriptural sciences and collected its jewels and pearls, cut open the treasure-troves, removed its ingots, and polished its pieces. And this is why it contains such marvels as do cause necks to lower themselves in humility. Nonetheless, I present not this work as being free of error, for after all, human beings are undoubtedly prone to error. Furthermore, I live in times in which God fills people's hearts with envy, and where censure courses through people like blood in the body.

When God chooses to bring forth some unknown virtue
He does so through the tongues of the envious
For if fire burnt not all around it
The Aloe's fragrance would have remained masked

These are people overcome by the times and by their vanity, whose love for leadership has made them blind and deaf. They turned away from the teachings of the *shari`ah* and have thus forgotten it. Instead they have become engrossed in philosophy, which they study avidly. Some of them long for progress but are so denied by God, they seek respect but have no knowledge thereof, and thus finds themselves with neither friend nor aide.

What! Do these rhymes march under flags other than ours
Even though it is we who control their utterings

This notwithstanding, you will see that they are nothing, if not haughty, having hearts that are filled with disdain against the truth, and making statements that emerge from them all made up. Whenever they are invited to the truth they feign deafness and blindness, as if God has not delegated guardians over them to record the words and their deeds. The world for them is accursed, the plaything of children and those ignorant. The accomplished one for them is reviled, living a life of loss.

By God! These are indeed, are times when adopting silence is a necessity, and so too, is confining one’s self to one's own abode, all the while putting into action, the knowledge one acquires. This would be so, but for the following *sahīh* tradition: "Whosoever acquires knowledge and conceals it will be bridled with a bridle of fire by God." Someone has spoken well in saying that

Pursue, at all times, virtue
Expend therein your body and mind
Seek therewith God's pleasure
And the pleasure of one who listens, and tries to follow
Ignore the sayings of the envious
For envy, surely ends with death

And I humbly beseech God, Mighty and Glorious is He, that He accept this humble effort just as He made possible the completion of this work. And that He make us of the early pioneers, of the followers of His Prophet (s), and that He not dash our hopes. He is, indeed, Magnanimous: one who places his hopes in Him will not be disappointed, and one who abandons everything apart from Him and looks to Him, will not be humiliated.

And God, salute and grant salvation to the one after whom no prophet is to come, our master, Muĥammad, and to his Companions and his household. And do so, for as long as the conscientious retain this practice, and for as long as the unmindful remain unmindful of it.

‘l-Muĥkam and ‘l-Mutashābih

God, Almighty has said: "It is He who sent down to you the Book; some of it comprises of the categorical verses (*muĥkamāt*)--these are basic to the Book--and others, the allegorical (*mutashābihāt*).(9:3) Ibn Ĥabīb ‘l-Nīsāpūrī reports three definitions of this topic:[1]

> All of the Quran is muĥkam, for the Almighty says: ". . .a book whose verses have been rendered categorical."(11:2)
>
> All of the Qur'an is allegorical, for the Almighty says: ". . .An allegorical writ with paired statements.”(39:23)
>
> The correct opinion, and one which is based on the first mentioned verse, divides the Book into muĥkam and mutashābih verses. As for the other two verses mentioned above, the *iĥkām* (as implied in the term *uĥkimat*) in the first verse refers to the Book being precise and flawless and the *tashābuh* implied in the second verse, refers to the likeness all verses share in being right, truthful, and inimitable. One scholar argues however, that the verse in no implies the Qur’ān’s limitations to these two categories; nothing in the Qur'an to this effect, they say???. Besides, such a limitation is untenable in light of the Almighty’s statement: "(We sent them with miracles and Books) . . . that you may make comprehensible to men what was sent down to them . . . " ({Al-Zarkashi 1957} *Muĥkam* verses in light of this, are not based solely on the plain statement, nor are their any definitive interpretations of the *mutashābih* verses to be expected.

There are, with regard to the definitions of the *muĥkam* and the *mutashābih* verses, the following contradictory views:

> Muĥkam refers to verses whose purport is quite manifest or becomes so through interpretation, while mutashābih refers to verses whose knowledge God prefers keeping to himself. To the latter category belongs knowledge pertaining to the Last Day, the emergence of the Anti-Christ, and the meaning of the cryptic opening verses of the

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[1] Also see ‘l-Ansārī, Zakariyya *Fatĥ ‘l-Raĥmān bi Kashf ma Yaltabisu fi ‘l-Qur’ān* (Beirut:1403) Dār ‘l-Qur’ān ‘l-Karīm. 78-79

chapters of the Qur`an.

Verses whose meaning is clear and open are muĥkam and those that are not are *mutashābih*.

Muĥkam refers to a verse that can be interpreted in but one way, and mutashābih to a verse that can be interpreted in more ways than one.

A muĥkam verse, according to Māwardī[2], can be rationally comprehended whilst the mutashābih cannot be. The latter includes, the number of prayer cycles (*raka`ah)* in the daily prayers, or the choice of Ramaďān, as opposed to say, Sha`bān.[3] as the month of fasting.

A Muĥkam verse can be understood by itself, whereas a mutashābih verse cannot be understood except by reference to other verses.

The meaning of a muĥkam verse is embedded in its rc, whereas that of a mutashābih verse is known only through further interpretation.

The wording in the muĥkam verses is not repeated elsewhere while those in the *mutashābih* is.

Muĥkam verses deal with obligatory duties, they give glad tidings and admonitions, while mutashābih verses deal with narratives and parables.

In the view of Ibn `Abbās as quoted by Ibn Abū Ĥātim[4] through `Alī b. Abū T̄alĥa muĥkam refers to verses that are to be believed in and acted upon. Included therein are the abrogating verses, verses that make lawful and unlawful, divine ordinances, and verses that make acts obligatory. Mutashābih verses, on the other hand, are not acted upon though they constitute key elements of belief. Included therein are the abrogated verses, (hyperbaton) those revealed earlier and those later, the parables and the oaths.

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[2]

[3] Sha`bān and Ramadān are respectively, the eighth and ninth month of the Islamic lunar, calendar.

[4]

Firyābī[5] quotes Mujāhid[6] as saying: “Muĥkam verses contain lawful and unlawful injunctions while the remaining verse are mutashābih which corroborate each other. Ibn Abū Ĥātim quotes Rabī` as saying that muĥkam verses contain commands and admonitions.[7]

Ibn Abū Ĥātim also quotes Isĥāq b. Suwaid as sayng that both Yaĥya b. Ya`mar and Abū Fākhita discussed the meaning of the foregoing verse. The latter was of the opinion that it referred to the opening verses of the chapters while the former held that (muĥkam verses) are those that refer to obligatory duties, the imperatives, the proscriptions, and the lawful.[8]

‘l-Ĥākim and others quote Ibn `Abbās as saying that the last three verses of the Cow, from the verse “Qul ta`ālau. . .”(6:151-153) and the two verses that follow, are all muĥkam.[9] Ibn Abū Ĥātim also quotes Ibn `Abbās through another source as saying that the verse “Therein are verses, categorical. . .” refers to "Say, come..."(6:150) and the three verses (sic) which are all muĥkam. And it refers to the verse "And your Lord hath decreed that you worship none but Him..."(23:17) and the three that follow.

`Abd b. Ĥumaid quotes Ďaĥĥāk as saying that muĥkam verses are those that have not been abrogated, while mutashābih verses are those that have been abrogated.[10]

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[5]

[6]

[7] See also,‘l-Tabarī, vol. 3, pp. 172-173

[8] ‘l-Ţabarī, *Tafsir*. vol. 3, p. 173

[9] ‘l-Hākim, *‘l-Mustadrak*, vol.2, pp.288-317

[10] ‘l-Ţabarī, vol, 3, p.173.

Ibn Abū Ĥātim quotes Muqātil b. Ĥayyān as saying: "The mutashābih verses as reported to us are: *Alif, Lām, Mīm*; *Alif, Lām, Mīm, Sād*; and *Alif, Lām, Mīm, Rā*.[11] Ibn Abū Ĥātim also quotes `Ikrima, Qatāda and others to the effect that while muĥkam verses are to be acted upon *mutashābih* verses are to be believed in but not acted upon.[12]

DIVISION

Is it at all possible to comprehend the meaning of the mutashābih verses, or is this known to God alone? There are two opinions in this regard based on the verse: "...Wa 'l-rāsikhūna fi 'l-`ilm".(3:7) A small group of scholars including Mujāhid, and, according to one view, Ibn `Abbās himself, believe that the foregoing is an explicative adjunction (*ma`ţūf*), whilst the word, *yaqūlūna* which follows is the circumstantial expression (*ĥāl*). Most however, are of the opinion that ". . .'l-rāsikhūna fi 'l-`ilm" is the subject, "yaqūlūna" the predicate, and the particle "wa" an inceptive particle.[13] Ibn Mundhir however, reports on the authority of Mujāhid that Ibn `Abbas believed he was of those who understood the meaning of the mutashābih as referred to in the verse: "wa mā ya`lamu ta'wīlahū illa Allāh; wa 'l-rāsikhūn fi 'l-`ilm." [14]

And with regard to the words "and those steeped in knowledge" `Abd b. Ĥumayd quotes Mujāhid as saying that it refers to those who know the interpretation of the (mutashābih verses) and say, "We believe therein."[15]

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[11] These letters, known as the *'l-ĥurūf 'l-muqaṭṭa`a* appear as the opening verses of some of the chapters of the Qur'an

[12] `Abd 'l-Razzāq, *'l-Tafsir*, vol.1, 115

[13] See s.3,v.7.

[14] ". . .and none knows the interpretation (of the *mutashābih*) except God and those steeped in knowledge." Also see, 'l-Ţabarī. *'l-Tafsir*, vol.3, p.183

[15] 'l-Ţabari, vol.3 p.183

Ibn Abū Ĥātim quotes Ďaĥĥāk as saying that ‘those steeped in knowledge’ know the interpretation of the mutashābih, for if that was not the case then they would not have known the abrogating verses from those abrogated, or the lawful verses from the unlawful, or the muĥkam verses from the mutashābih. In his commentary of the ‘l-Saĥīĥ[16] ‘l-Nawawī explains that this is the most accurate view because it is improbable that God would address his servants in a way that would make their understanding thereof inaccessible. Ibn ‘l-Ĥājib said that this was obvious.

But the `majority of the Companions--including Ibn `Abbās according to the most authentic reports--along with the Successors (*tābi`ūn*) and especially those belonging to the *Ahl ‘l-Sunna*[17] subscribe to the opposing view. Ibn ‘l-Sam`ānī says in this regard: “Only the minority has inclined to the first view, including ‘l-`Utabī who notwithstanding his affiliations to the *Ahl ‘l-Sunna*, was obviously wrong in this regard. This should come as no surprise, for even horses stumble, and even scholars err.

That the majority’s recitation is sound is attested to by `Abd ‘l-Razzāq’s report in his exegesis and ‘l-Ĥākim’s in his work *‘l-Mustadrak*, on the authority of Ibn `Abbās, who recited the verse in question thus: "and none knows its interpretation except God; and those steeped in knowledge simply say: ‘We believe therein’.[18] This proves that the letter *wāw* is indeed an inceptive particle. As for the report itself, whilst it lacks the probative value needed to establish an alternative recitation of the verse, it does, at the least, function as an authentic report from the 'Expositor of the Qur'an' (i.e. Ibn `Abbās) himself; this view therefore, should be given priority over those of lesser scholars. It is also supported by the verse itself which implies a rebuke of those who propound the allegorical, describing them as deviants, and those seeking dissension.

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[16] See

[17] This is a complex definition that usually refers to those who accept the authority of hadith traditions and subscribe to the theology of the majority of Muslims. It is more popularly used to distinguish between Sunni and Shiite communities.

[18] Al-Ĥākim, *‘l-Mustadrak*, vol.2, p.289.

But those who entrust knowledge (of such verses) to God and yield to Him are praised in the verse in the same way that God praises those who believe in the Unseen.

Al-Farrā` reports that the recitation of Ubayy b. K`ab also includes the words, '*wa yaqūlu ʻl-rāsikhūna*.' In the work *ʻl-Masāĥif*, Ibn Abū Dāwūd narrates through A`mash that Ibn Mas`ūd's reading included the following: "*Wa in taʻwīluhū illa `inda Allah wa ʻl-rāsikhūna fī ʻl-`ilm yaqūlūna āmanna bihī*"[19] Bukhārī and Muslim quote `Ā'isha as saying: the Prophet (s) once recited the verse, "huwa alladhī anzala `alaika ʻl-kitāb. . . .'ulu albāb"[20] and then said, "If you see people pursuing the allegorical therein, know that they are the ones that God speaks of, and be wary of them."[21] Ţabarānī, in his work, *ʻl-Kabīr* quotes Abū Mālik ʻl-Ash`arī as saying that he heard the Messenger of God (s) say: "I fear not for my community but three things: that as their wealth increases so shall their envy, until they quarrel with each other; that when the Book is presented to them (as argument) the believer would seek to interpret it (contrary to its obvious intent) when in fact only God alone knows its interpretation. . ."[22]

Ibn Mardawaih quotes a tradition of `Amr b. Shu`aib wherein his father quotes his grandfather who quotes the Prophet (s) as saying: "The Qur'an did not come down so that parts thereof falsify others; thus, practice thereof, that which you know, and believe in that which is allegorical."[23] ʻl-Ĥākim, on the authority of Ibn Mas`ūd quotes the Prophet (s) as saying: "The first book was first sent down in but one form and with just one recitation, whereas the Qur'an was sent down in seven forms, and with the following seven modes of recital: the reprimand; the command; the lawful, the unlawful, the allegorical, and the parable. Thus, consider lawful its lawfuls, and unlawful, its unlawfuls; fulfil all obligations, and shun all proscriptions; ponder its parables, act in accordance with its unambiguities, and believe in its allegories; and always say: ‘We believe therein; it is all from our Lord." [24]‘l-Baihaqī quotes a similar report from Abū Huraira in the section of his book dealing with the branches of faith.

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[19] "And indeed, its interpretation is but with God; and those steeped in knowledge say 'we believe in it."See Ibn Abū Dā'ud, *ʻl-Maśāĥif*, (Beirut: Dār ʻl-Kutub ʻl-`Ilmiyya) n.d., p.69

[20] "He it is who sent down to you the Book.. . .men of wisdom."

[21] ʻl-Bukhārī #4547, ʻl-Saĥīĥ, #2665

[22] Al-Ţabarānī, *ʻl-Mu`jam ʻl-Kabīr*, vol.3, p.332

[23] Ibn Hanbal, Aĥmad *Musnad* vol.2, p.181

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[24] Al-Hākim, ‘l-Mustadrak, vol.2, p.,181

Ibn Jarīr by way of a *marfū`* tradition quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying: "The Qur'an was sent down in four forms: the lawful and the unlawful, which none can plead ignorance of; commentaries about matters known only to the Arabs; commentaries on matters known only to scholars; and allegories known to God alone. All others besides God who make claims to such knowledge are indeed liars."[25] And by way of a *mauqūf* report he quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying much the same.[26]

Ibn Abu Ĥātim on the authority of ‘l-`Aufī quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying: "We believe in the muĥkam verses and yield to them without question, whilst we believe in the mutashābih verses without yielding to them--it is all from God. `Ąisha is reported by him as having said: “It was their deep understanding that prompted them to believe in the allegorical even without comprehension.” He also quotes Abu ‘l-Sha`thā’ and Abu Nuhaik as saying: “You recite these verses without pause, when in fact it does contain a pause.”

Al-Dārimī in his *Musnad* quotes Sulaiman b. ‘l-Yasār as saying that a man named śabīgh on arriving in Medina began delving into the allegories of the Qur’an. `Umar had a date frond prepared, summoned him, and then beat him until his head was all bloody. In another report he beat him with a palm frond stripped of its leaves, leaving welts on his back. He left him to recover and thereafter beat him again, twice. When summoned once more the man said: “Kill me if you like, but do so humanely!” `Umar then let him return to his territory but not before informing Abu Musa ‘l-’Ash’ari that no Muslim be allowed to sit in the man’s company.

Al-Dārimi quotes `Umar b. ‘l-Khattāb as saying: “In time people will engage you in controversies about the allegories of the Qur’an; hold them to the sunna, for those with knowledge about the sunna are most knowledgeable about the Book of God.” These statements and hadith traditions indicate that the meaning of the allegorical verses is known to God alone, and delving therein is reprehensible. More on this will follow soon.

Al-Taibī said: Muĥkam refers to that section of the Qur’ān whose meaning is clear and mutashābih to its opposite. Proof for this is to be found in the fact that a word having a meaning will be in but one of two cases: firstly, where more than one meaning exists and secondly, where only one meaning exists. The latter case is called *nass*. In the former case the original meaning of the word may supercede its ancillary meaning, in which case it would be termed *zāhir*, or both meanings may equally apply, in which case it will be termed *mujmal*, or they may not apply at all, in which case it will be termed *mu’awwal*. Any meaning that prevaricates between the *nass* and the *zāhir* is called muĥkam and between the *mujmal* and the *mu`awwal* is called mutashābih. This delineation is supported by the fact that the Almighty placed the muĥkam in contrast to the mutashābih.

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[25] Al-Ţabarī, vol.1, p.57

[26] Al-Ţabarī, vol.1, p.57

The scholars have said: “It is incumbent to explain the muĥkam in light of its opposite, as alluded to by the very structure of the verse which differentiates even while bringing together two ideas. So when God says “. . .in it are categorical verses; they constitute the essence of the Book, whilst there are others which are allegorical.” (2:7) He puts together, and at the same time, differentiates, all in one in one verse. And, He explains each part of the verse by saying “. . .but those in whose hearts is doubt. . . and those steeped in knowledge say ‘We believe therein. . .” whereas He could well have said “As for those with fortitude in their hearts, they follow the categorical verses”. Instead, He invokes the term *rusūkh* in the verse: “and those steeped in knowledge (a*l-rāsikhun fi ’l-`ilm*), for it is a quality acquired only after much introspection and deep inquiry, and uttered only after the heart is set upon righteousness and the feet is firmly planted in knowledge. The prayers of those steeped in knowledge, that is: ‘ Our Lord! Let not our hearts stray. . .’ testifies to the fact that the words ‘*’l-rasikhun fi al`ilm*’ are a counterpoint to the words ‘*fa amma alladhina fi qulūbihim zaigh*’. It also points to the fact that the pause at the words *illa Allah* is complete, and that knowledge of some kinds of the allegorical is known to God, Almighty alone. It also points to the fact that the words ‘*fa iĥdharūhum*’ in the foregoing tradition, applies to those who seek this kind of knowledge.

Some scholars have said that the mind is obliged to believe in the verity of the allegorical verses much like the body is obliged to perform the ritual prayers. This is like a sage who compiles a book which in places is deliberately cryptic so that the student is humbled before his teacher. Or like a king who takes some sign to be used to identify his confidantes. It has been said that the mind, the most noble part of the body, if not challenged, would let the scholar wallow in ignorance about the limitations of his knowledge and cause him to become conceited. The task of unraveling the allegorical however, helps him maintain a sense of humility and subservience. The allegorical verses, after all, are places where the mind humbles itself to its Creator, surrendering and acknowledging its imperfection. The culminating words of the Almighty's statement: ". . .but only persons of understanding truly heed', rebukes the perverted ones and praises those steeped in knowledge by implying that one who is unmindful, who refuses admonition, and fails to confront his base desires is not of the understanding ones. It is for this reason that those steeped in knowledge say: "O Lord! Let not our hearts go astray. . ." They thus submit to their Creator awaiting the advent of mystic knowledge, after seeking refuge in Him from the caprices of the self.

ʻl-Khattābi said: "Allegories are of two kinds: One, whose meaning becomes manifest if examined in light of the categorical, and two, whose actual meaning remains forever unattainable. This latter is what the perverted ones delve into, without ever arriving at its essence. They then begin to harbor doubts about such verses and are thus misled.

Ibn ʻl-Haśśār has said: "God has divided the verses of the Qur'an into the categorical and the allegorical, and declared that the former is the mother of the Book, which is why the latter must be understood in reference to it. Also, the categorical is pivotal to unraveling His intent in the duties He's placed upon them, to affirming His messengers, and to fulfilling His orders and eschewing His proscriptions–this then makes the categorical the mother of the Book. And thereafter, He speaks of those whose hearts are beguiled, those who delve into the allegorical verses. This means that one without faith in the categorical and with doubt in his heart gains pleasure in the pursuit of the allegorical. The Divine Legislator's intent thereby was to provide an incremental understanding of the categorical verses and to give priority to the essential verses so that one acquires conviction and deep knowledge, and thus, remains unperturbed by ambiguity. And by those with hearts beguiled is meant those bent on unraveling the obscure verses, and on understanding the allegorical verses before the categorical; this contradicts all that is logical, normal and prescribed. They are like the polytheists who demand from their prophets signs other than those presented, presuming, out of ignorance, that this would bring them faith; but they know not that faith comes only with the leave of God."

In his work *Mufradāt ‘l-Qur’an* Raghib (Isfahāni) said: “When looked at in conjunction with each other verses are found to be of 3 kinds: absolutely allegorical, absolutely categorical, and allegorical in some regards and categorical in others. As for the allegorical verses they are in total of 3 kinds: allegorical in respect of a single word, allegorical in respect of the statement as a whole, and allegorical in both respects. The first form, in turn, is of two kinds: firstly, that which applies to single words that are either rare like “‘*‘l-ab*” and “*yaziffūn*”, or have shared meanings, such as ‘*‘l-yadd*’ and *‘l-yamīn*’. Secondly, that which applies to statements, which are of 3 kinds, and which comprise of that which is allegorical:

i- because of its brevity, as in “wa in khiftum an lā tuqsiţū fi ‘l-yatāma fa ankiĥū mā ţāba lakum. . .”[27](3:4)

ii- because of its redundancy, as in “laisa ka mithlihī shayy”[28] (11:42) But saying “There is none (mithluhū) like Him” instead would have made it more explicit to the listener.

iii-because of the arrangement of the verse, as in “anzala `alā `abdihī ‘l-kitāb wa lam yaj`al lahū `iwajan; qayyiman”[29](18:2) which implies: ‘He sent down a straightforward Book and made it not crooked.”

The allegorical in respect of meaning refers to verses dealing with the attributes of God and descriptions about the Last Day, for these fall outside our scope of understanding. We are unable to visualize that which is outside our sensory perception.

The allegorical in word and meaning is of five kinds:

1-From the standpoint of quantity, as in general and specific verses such as the verse: “fa uqtulū ‘l-mushrikīn”[30] (9:5)

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[27] “And if you fear that you will not deal fairly with the orphans then marry, of those that please you. . .”

[28] “there is none like unto Him”

[29] “He revealed to His servant a Book which He had not made crooked.”

[30] “Kill the pagans!”

2-From the standpoint of manner, as in verses that impose duties that are either compulsory or optional such as in the verse: “fa ankiĥū mā ţāba lakum”[31](4:3)
3-From the standpoint of time, as in the abrogating and the abrogated verses such as “ittaqā Allāh ma istaţa`tum”[32](3:102)

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[31] “Marry of the women that please you. . .”

[32] “Be Fearful of God to the fullest extent.”

4-From the standpoint of place and the circumstances surrounding it, as in “wa laisa ‘l-birr bi an ta’tu ‘l-buyūta min źuhūrihā”[33](2:189) and “innamā ‘l-nasī’u ziyādatun fi ‘l-kufr”[34] (9:37) Those unaware of the traditions of pre-Islamic Arabia would find difficulty understanding the foregoing verses.

5-From the standpoint of preconditions that validate or invalidate an act, as in the preconditions of daily prayers and marriage.

He said: On examining the foregoing collection it becomes abundantly clear that all that the exegetes have said with regard fall completely within this collection.

Furthermore, the allegorical verses when taken together, fall into three categories:

1-That which can never be known, such as the Last Hour, the appearance of the monsters (*'l-dābba*; these would appear prior to the last Day) etc.

2-That which human beings can know, such as words that are unusual or rules that are problematic.

3-That which falls in between, and is known to those steeped in knowledge, but obscured from those besides them. This is alluded to in the prophetic statement to Ibn `Abbās: “Oh! God! Grant him the understanding of the faith and knowledge of interpreting (the Qur’an).

This then tells us that pausing between the verses, “And none but God knows the interpretation of it” and “And those steeped in knowledge” or reading them as one, are equally valid: Each of these alternatives has an interpretation as explained above.

Imām Fakhr ‘l-Dīn said: “Replacing the primary meaning of a word with a secondary meaning requires independent proof that may be either literal or rational. The literal, because of its ambiguity, is not considered irrefutable evidence in matters of faith. For evidence to be irrefutable 10 of the well known probabilities must not be present; that they are in any given context not present is at best a probability itself. Now, because that which is contingent upon a probability is itself a probability, evidence that is probable–as is the aforementioned--is thus not acceptable in matters of faith. As for rational proof it serves only to shift the word away from its literal connotation in cases where such a connotation is inconceivable. But as for proving, through rational evidence, that a particular meaning is the only correct one, that is impossible through rational evidence for it requires that one figurative interpretation or explanation be prioritized over another. To do so, one will have to resort to literal evidence which, as mentioned heretofore, is an inadequate way of prioritizing, for it furnishes probable proof at best, and probable proof cannot be depended on for fundamental issues requiring definitive evidence. This is why meticulous scholars, both past and present, have ruled, based on irrefutable evidence, that shifting a word away from the primary meaning to a secondary one cannot be corroborated even by way of irrefutable evidence. They thus suggest that protracted inquiry into isolating specific meanings be avoided.

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[33] “Righteousness is not that you approach the House from its rear”

[34] “Intercalation is one further example of their disbelief. . .”

Section

Verses that deal with the attributes of God fall in the category of the allegorical. They include the following examples:

1-"'l-Raĥmān `ala 'l-`arsh istawā"[35] (20:5)
2-"Kullu shayi`n hālikun illa wajhahu"[36](28:88)
3-"wa yabqā wajhu rabbika"[37] (55:27)
4-"wa li tuśna`a `alā `ainī "[38](20:39)
5- "yad Allāh fauqa aydīhim"[39] (48:10)
6- "wa 'l-samāwāt maţwiyyāt bi yamīnih"[40](39:67)

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[35] "The Beneficent, who is firmly seated on the Throne

[36] "Everything will be destroyed except His Countenance."

[37] "And the Countenance of your Lord will remain"

[38] .so that he might be formed before My Eyes."

[39] "the Hand of God is above their hand."

[40] "and the Heavens, rolled up, are in His right hand."

Ibn ‘l-Labbān has dedicated a special work to this topic.

Most scholars including the pious ancestors (*salaf*) and the hadith folk insist that we believe in such verses, and that we defer their meaning and their real intent to God Almighty, without attempting to rationalize them; we should nonetheless, free Him of the literal application of their meanings.

Abu ‘l-Qāsim Al-Lālikā`i in his work *Al-Sunnah* quotes Umm Salama through Qurra b. Khālid, through ‘l-Hasan, through his mother, as saying: the “how” in the verse: “‘l-Raĥmān `ala ‘l-`arsh istawā” (20:5) is beyond rational comprehension, though the actual act of being seated is not unknown. However, affirming the act of sitting is a part of faith and knowingly denying it is an act of heresy.”[41] He also reports, that on being asked the meaning of the verse “‘l-Raĥmān `ala ‘l-`arsh istawā”(20:5) Rabī`a b. `Abd ‘l-Rahmān replied: “The act of sitting (*istiwā’*) is not unknown; the “how” however, is beyond comprehension.; the Epistle is from God, the Messenger had to declare it openly, and we are to affirm it” He also quotes Mālik in similar vein saying: “the “how” is beyond comprehension even though “sitting” is known. Belief therein is compulsory, whilst questioning it is heresy. And Baihaqī through a marfu` tradition quotes him as saying: “He is as He describes Himself, and one should not ask: How! How![42] And ‘l-Lālikā`i quotes Muhammad b. ‘l-Hasan as saying: “Scholars from east to west agree that the attributes of God must be accepted without comment and without rationalizing or allegorizing them.

And Tirmidhi, in his commentary of the tradition that speaks of seeing the face of God, said: “The doctrine of the preeminent scholars such as Sufyān ‘l-Thaurī, Mālik, Ibn ‘l-Mubārak, Ibn `Uyayna, and Wakī` is that ‘We report these traditions as is, we believe therein without inquiring how, and we neither rationalize about them, nor doubt them.’ Some members of the Ahl ‘l-Sunna–following the doctrine of the successors (*‘l-khalaf*)–assert that we ought to interpret such verses in a way that befits the Majesty of the Almighty. Imam ‘l-Haramain (‘l-Juwaini) who initially subscribed to this doctrine, and then recanted, asserted in the work *‘l-Risala ‘l-Nizamiyya* the following: “That which we sanction as the correct path, and declare as God’s prescribed way is the path of the forerunners (*‘l-salaf*) who eschewed delving into its details.”

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[41] 3 397

[42] 2 150-151

Ibn ‘l-śalāĥ has said: “This indeed, is the path trodden by the early community and its leaders, the one chosen by the leading jurists, and espoused by the scholars and the luminaries of the science of hadith. And of the theologians, not a single companions of ours has snubbed or denied this path. But Ibn Burhān, preferred interpreting the allegories, saying that “The conflict between these two groups hinges around whether parts of the Qur’an ought to be unknown to us, or, should they be known to those steeped in knowledge? Ibn Daqīq ‘l-`Id however, taking the middle ground in his response, said that “Any interpretation that closely tracks the linguistic norms of the Arabs should not be rejected. If however, it is far removed therefrom then we ought suspend judgement, and accept its meaning at face value, with the proviso that ultimately God is above all such qualities. Thus in the verse: “Yā ĥasratā `alā mā farraţtu fī janb Allāh”[43] (39:56) We interpret the words ‘*janb Allah*’ by considering the right of God and what behooves Him.

I will now mention hereunder interpretations of the foregoing verses that conform to the standards of the Ahl ‘l-Sunna.

A-Sitting (istiwā’): In sum, I have found seven explanations to this:

i)Istawa means to be firmly placed: This is Muqātil and Kalbi’s report from Ibn `Abbās. Even if this is correct it still requires further explanation because it implies divine substantiation.

ii) Istawa means to become dominant. This interpretation is unacceptable for two reasons: firstly, given that God has always been dominant over creation, over heaven and hell and all its denizens, what possible benefit is there in singling out the Throne? And secondly, dominance comes only after power and victory are achieved, whereas God Almighty is above such encounters. ‘l-Lālikā`i reports in the work *‘l-Sunna* that Ibn ‘l-A`rābi on being asked the meaning of i*stawa*, said: “He is seated on His Throne as He instructed. But he was told instead: “O, Abu `Abd Allah! Actually it means to take possession of (*istawla*)!” He replied: “Be quiet! One never says istawla’ except in cases where there is opposition; thus, when one party vanquishes the other the word istawla is used.”

iii)According to Abu `Ubaid *istawa* means to ascend. This too, is unacceptable because it does not befit the majesty of God.

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[43] “Woe unto me! How unmindful have I been of my proximity to God”

iv) According to Ismā`il b. Ďarīr in his commentary the verse actually implies that the Beneficent ascends and that the Throne is His resting place. This view is unacceptable for two reasons: firstly, because it changes the universally accepted preposition *ilā* to the verb *`alā*; as a verb it would have been written with the letter *alif* , as in the verse: "`alā fi 'l-ard"[44] (28:4). Secondly, the word *`arsh* is then read in the nominative form, which no expert on recitation has done.

v)The verse is said to end at the word *`arsh*, with a new one beginning thus: "*istawa lahu*. . ." This too is rejected because it effaces the verse's structure and purpose. I maintain that the word *lahu* does not appear at all in the verse: "thumma istawā 'alā 'l-ard"

vi) *Istawa* as mentioned by Ash`ari, Farrā', some rhetoricians, and as endorsed by Ismā`il b. 'l-Darir is that He embarked on, and undertook to build the Throne, as mentioned in the verse: "Thumma istawā ila 'l-samā' wa hiya dukhān"[45](41:11) The fact that the verb in the verse is made transitive by the preposition *`ala* renders this possibility remote; for the foregoing interpretation to apply the word *ilā* ought to have been used instead. This is the case in the verse: "thumma istawā ilā 'l-samā'[46](41:11)

vii) Ibn 'l-Labbān has said: "The *istiwā'* attributed to the Almighty refers to balance, and to Him exercising even handedness, as in the verse: "qā'iman bi 'l-qisţ"[47](3:18) Evenhandedness is His istiwā' and it refers to Him bestowing, in accordance with His great wisdom, due measure, to all that He created.

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[44] ". . .he was insolent (`*ala*)on earth'

[45]"Then He turned to the Heavens while it was still smoke."

[46]"Then He turned to the Heavens. . ."

[47]". . .Controlling His creation with evenhanded-ness."

B-The word *nafs*, as in the verse: “ta`lamu mā fī nafsī wa lā a`lamu mā fī nafika”[48](5:116) Given that the word *nafs* resembles the word *ghaib* inasmuch as they are both concealed from view it has been suggested that the word is being used here to show inference. Then there is the verse: “wa yuĥadhdhirukum Allāh nafsahu”[49] (.......)where the word *nafs* is said to refer to His punishment; or as a substitute for the pronoun *iyyāhu*. “The word *nafs*” Suhaili has said “is an idiom for actual existence and no more, which is why it is the stem of the word *nafāsa* (precious) and is inherent in the phrase *‘l-shay ‘l-nafis*, a priceless object. And this is also why the word applies fittingly to God Almighty. The scholars have provided several interpretations for this word, Ibn ‘l-Labbān explains, including the notion that *nafs* refers to the essence. “Even though this conforms to linguistic norms,” he says, “making the verb therein transitive with the preposition *fi* which suggests time and place, is inconceivable in the case of the Almighty.” Others have interpreted the word to mean the Unseen, which would then read as: ‘I know not what is in your Unseen or among your secrets’ “This view”, he says, “in light of the words that follow: ‘You are indeed, All knowing about the Unseen.”(3:29), is quite appropriate.

3-The word *wajh* (face)which is interpreted to mean essence. But Ibn Labbān says that in the following verses it refers to sincere intent.: “yurīdūna wajhahū”(6:52)[50] “innamā nuţ`imukum li wajh Allāh”[51](76:9); and “illa ibtighā’a wajhi rabbihi ‘l-‘a`lā”[52](92:20) Another scholar said that in the verse, “fa thamma wajh Allāh”[53](2:115) it refers to the direction towards which He has instructed us to face.

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[48] “You know full well what is in my mind, while I know not what is in Your Mind.”

[49] “. . .And God warns you about His Being”

[50] “They seek His Face.”

[51] “We feed you purely for the Face of God.”

[52] “. . .Except as seeking the Face of his Lord, Most High.”

[53] “. . .there exists the Face of God”

4-The word *`ain*, according to some scholars and in contradiction to others, is used literally when referring to vision or perception, and allegorically  when referring to the human organ. The real allegory is in naming the human organ thus. “The ascription of the word *`ain* to the Almighty” Ibn ‘l-Labbān has said “is in reference to His recognizable signs whereby He perceives the Believers and they perceive Him. The Almighty has said that in the : “Fa lammā jā’athum āyātunā mubśiratan”[54](29:13) the word *mubsira* is used allegorically and attributed specifically to the word signs, to show that this indeed is the implication of the word *`ain* when attributed to God. The same is the case in the verse: “qad jā’akum baśā’iru min rabbikum fa man abśara fa linafsihi; wa man amiya fa `alaihā”[55](6:104) And in the verse: “wa iśbir li ĥukmi rabbika fa innaka bi a`yuninā”[56](52:48) it is through our signs that you perceive Us and We perceive you.”

That the word *a`yun* means sign in the foregoing case, he said, is clearly supported by the following verse wherein He uses a sign (‘l-Qur’an) to explain the requirement of forbearance (sabr) “innā naĥnu nazzalnā `alaika ‘l-qur’ān tanzīlan; fa iśbir li ĥukm rabbika wa lā tuţi` minhum āthiman au kafūran”[57] (76:23) Similarly, in the verse about Noah’s ark: “tajrī bi a`yuninā”[58](54:14) the word in question arefers to “our signs”, as is clear from the verse: “wa qāla irkabū fīhā bism Allāh majrehā wa mursāhā”[59](11:41) Also, in the verse: “Wa li tuśna`a `alā

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[54] “. . .And when Our signs came to them, in plain view (*mubsira*). . .”

[55] “Unto you have come signs (*baśā’ir*) from your Lord; whosoever then percieves (*abśara)* does so to his advantage, and whosoever is blinded shall be overcome by it”

[56] Another example is the verse: “Now, await the order of your Lord; for surely you are in Our sight ”

[57] “We indeed, have sent to you the Qur’ān, a revelation; Now therefore, remain forbearing of the command of your Lord.”

[58] “. . that floats in Our sight (a`yunina). . .”

[59] “He said: ‘All aboard! For its sailing and its berthing occur only with the Name of God”

`ainī”[60](20:39) the words ‘My signs as revealed to your mother’, are meant, as is clear from the verse that follows: “an arď’i`īhi fa idhā khifti `alaihi fa alqīhī fī ‘l-yamm”[61](28:7) Another scholar maintains that this word actually refers to the Almighty’s protective gaze.

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[60] “. . .so that you may be tutored before My Eyes”

[61] “(And We revealed to the mother of Moses, saying) Suckle him! And when you become fearful for his safety cast him into the river. . .”

5-The word *yadd* (hand) which in the following verses is said to imply power: “li mā khalaqtu bi yadayya”[62](38:75); “yadd Allāh fauqa aidīhim”[63](48:10); “min mā `amilat aidīnā”[64](38:71); “wa anna ‘l-faďl bi yadda Allāh[65](57:29) Suhailī has said: “The hand, like vision, is in essence a trope used to ascribe an attribute to a subject, which is why God Almighty, in the verse: “‘ūlī ‘l-aidī wa ‘l-abśār”[66] (38:45), commends strength when coupled with vision, but not with limbs. This is because praise is given to qualities and not just to body parts.??? Which is why Ash`arī said that the word *yadd* is an attribute used by the sacred law. and that which is implied by this attribute is that it is close to the meaning of power (*qudra*), except that the latter is general while the former is specific. This is like the word love (*mahabba*) when used to imply want (*irāda*) and desire (mashī’a). Thus, there is in the word *yadd* a necessary conferment of honor.”

Baghawi also said: “Properly speaking, where the dual form of the word *yadd* is used in reference to God, two attributes of His essence are intended and not any allusion to power, ability and bounty. Mujāhid said: “The word *yadd* in this context is akin to the usage of the word *wajh* in the verse: “wa yabqā wajhu rabbika. . .”[67](55:27) which shows emphasis and a link between God and Adam. But Baghawi regards this view as weak, for if this were the case then “Iblīs would have been well within his rights to say: “If (he is worthy of a prostration) simply because Thou had created him, then (I too am worthy) because it is you who created me.” The same is true for divine power and bounty: Adam in these cases also enjoys no special privilege over Iblis.”

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[62] “. . .that which I created with both My hands”

[63] “The Hand of God is above their hands”

[64] “. . .that which our hands have made”

[65] “and that the bounty is in God’s Hands”

[66] “men with strength (*aydī*) and vision (*abśār*)”

[67] “And all that remains is the face of your Lord”

Why were two hands needed to create Adam! Ibn ʻl-Labbān explains: ʻGod alone knows what He intended thereby, but a close scrutiny of His Scripture suggests to me that the word *yadain* is a metaphor for His power radiating through two attributes: the radiance of power which is related to His attribute of bounty, and its radiance that is related to His justice. {His ability to create perfectly and with perfect proportion.} He thus shows how special and privileged Adam was in being created by virtue of these two attributes. He also said "It is the right hand that possesses the power to excel as is mentioned in the verse: "wa ʻl-samāwāt maţwiyyāt bi yamīnihī"[68](39:68)

6-The word sāq as in the verse: "yauma yukshafu `an sāqin"[69](68:42) which refers to the enormity of the event, or to its tumultuousness. This is similar to the expression *Qāmat ʹl-ĥarb `alā sāq*" (War broke out with severity!) Hākim reports in his *Mustadrak* on the authority of `Ikrima that Ibn `Abbās, on being asked about this verse, said: If some part of the Qur'ān is unclear to you then seek its explanation in poetry for it is the repository of the Arabic language. Consider the words of the poet:

Patience `Ināq! This is enduring evil
your people have forced me to smite necks
War has broken out between us, with great severity.

Ibn `Abbās explained that this referred to a day of hardship and severity.

7-The word *janb* as in the words of the Almighty: "`alā mā farra'ďtu fī janb Allāh"[70](39:56) which means: "I was remiss in obedience to Him and to His perquisites." This is because one can be remiss in obedience but not in gaining proximity. ???

8-The attribute *qurb* which in the verses: "fa innī qarīb"[71](2:186), and "wa naĥnu aqrabu ilaihi min ĥabl ‘l-warīd”[72] (50:16) is a trope for God’s knowledge.

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[68] "the skies are rolled up in His right hand."

[69] "On the day when the calf (sāq) is laid bare"

[70] ". . .that I was unmindful of the nearness *(janb*) of God"

[71] ". . .I am indeed, close."

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[72] “We are closer to him than his jugular vein”

9-The attribute signifying loftiness, which in the verses: “wa huwa ‘l-qāhir fauqa `ibādihi”[73](6:18), and “yakhāfūn rabbahum min fauqihim”[74](16:50) is said to mean loftiness, but in no particular direction. When Pharaoh said: “wa innā fauqahum qāhirūn”[75](7:127) he no doubt had not intended thereby, actual physical height.

8-The attribute *majī’*(coming) in the following verses: “wa jā’a rabbuka” [76](89:22) and: “au ya’tiya rabbuka”[77](6:158) refers to the coming of His command, for the angel comes only by His command and authority. This, it seems, is what He stresses in the verse: “wa hum bi ‘amrihī ya`malūn”[78] (21:27) The same applies to the verse: “fa idhhab anta wa rabbuka fa qātilā”[79](5:24) which means, ‘go with your Lord, and with His power, and may you be successful!’

9-The attribute *hubb* (love) as in the verses: “yuĥibbuhum wa yuĥibbūnahū”[80](5;5) and “fa ittabi`ūnī yuĥbibkum Allāh”[81] (3:31)

10-The attribute *ghadb* (anger) as in the verse: “wa ghaďim Allāh `alaihim”[82](48:6)

11-The attribute *riďa* (approval) as in the verse: “raďiya Allāh `anhum”[83](5:119)

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[73] “He is the Omnipotent; above His servants”

[74] “They fear their Lord; high above them.”

[75] “we are in power over them”

[76] “And your Lord will come”

[77] “Or if your Lord comes”

[78] “And they act according to His commands”

[79] “Go! Thou and thy Lord, and fight”

[80] “He loves them and they love Him”

[81] “so, follow me and God will love you”

[82] “And God was angry with them”

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[83] “God approves of them”

12-The attribute *`ajab* (amazement) as in the verse: "bal `ajibtu . ."[84] (37:12) and the verse: "wa in ta`jab fa `ajabun qauluhum"[85](13:5)
13-The attribute *raĥma* (mercy) as appears in numerous verses.

Scholars have said: "Every attribute that is inconceivable when applied to God Almighty must be interpreted according to its obvious connotation. Imam Fakhr 'l-Din has said: "All emotional characteristics such as, mercy, joy, happiness, anger, modesty, deceit, and mockery have a beginning and a climax. Take anger, for example: it begins with the gushing of blood into the heart, and climaxes in the formation of an intention to inflict harm on the object of the anger. This word, in reference to God, would apply, not to the first part thereof, which is the gushing of blood into the heart, but to the intent to inflict harm. The same is true for modesty: it begins with contrition and climaxes in the abandonment of an act. Thus the word hayā', with respect to God, may be applied to the abandonment of an act, not to a sense of contrition in the soul."

Hussain b. 'l-Fadl said: "The word *`ajab* (amazement) when used for God refers to the negation of a thing and its impossibility." When asked about the verse: "wa in ta`jab fa `ajabun qauluhum"(13:15) Junaid (Baghdadi) has said that God as such, is not amazed by anything, and so, in this particular case, He says to His messenger "I concur with what you say."

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[84] "Nay, but I was amazed! (when recited, *ajibtu*)

[85] "And if you thought that was something, then even more amazing is what they say.'

13-The word *`inda* (with) as in the verse: "`inda rabbika"[86](7:206) and "wa man `indahū"[87](5:52) Both these verses imply strength, proximity, and loftiness. Other verses include: "wa huwa ma`akum ainamā kuntum"[88](57:4); that is, He is with you through His knowledge. And the verse: "wa huwa Allāh fi 'l-samāwāt wa fi 'l-ard; ya`lamu sirrakum"[89](6:3) Baihaqi said: "The correct interpretation of this verse, like that of the verse: "wa huwa alladhī fi 'l-samā'i ilāhun wa fi 'l-arḍ ilāhun"[90](43:83) is that He is worshiped in the Heavens and on earth."[91] Ash`ari has said that "the adverb (of place) is related to the word "He knows", that is, He is knowledgeable about things in Heaven and on earth." Another such verse: "sa nafrughu lakum ayyuha 'l-thaqalān"[92](55:31) means 'We shall resolve to give you your due measure.'

Note

Ibn 'l-Labbān has said that the verse "inna baţsha rabbika la shadīd"[93](85:130) is not allegorical because it is explained by the verse that follows: "innahū huwa yubdi'u wa yu`īd"[94]; and it draws attention to His grip being a trope for His involvement in all the affairs of His creatures and particularly in their creation and resurrection."

Section

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[86] "with your Lord"

[87] "from Him. . ."

[88] "He is with you wherever you may be."

[89] "He is God, in the Heavens and in the Earth; and He knows your secrets."

[90] "He it is who is God in the Heavens and on earth."

[91] Baihaqī, 'l-Asmā' wa 'l-Sifāt vol.2 p.174

[92] "We shall dispose of you, O! you dependants."

[93] "Lo! The grip of your Lord is tight!"

[94] "He it is who initiates and repeats"

The opening verses of the chapters are also allegorical, and here too, the preferred view is that these mysteries are known only to God Almighty. Ibn ʻl-Mundhir and others report that on being asked the meaning of the opening verses of the chapters, Sha`bī replied: “Every book has a mystery, and the mystery of this Qur’ān are the opening verses of the chapters.”[95]

Others have also probed its meaning: Ibn Abū Hātim and others quote Ibn `Abbās on the authority of Abū ʻl-Duĥā as saying: “Alif Lām Mīm” : means ʻI am God, most Knowledgeable”, and: “Alif, Lām, Mīm, Sād” means “I am God, the One who distinguishes”; and: “Alif, Lām , Rā’ ” means: “I am God, the One who sees.” And he quotes Ibn `Abbās on the authority of Sa`id b. Jubair as saying: “Alif Lām Mīm, Hā Mīm, and Nūn, are truncated names. And he quotes Ibn `Abbās on the authority of `Ikrima as saying: “Alif Lām Mīm”, Hā Mīm and Nūn” are the disjointed letters of the word ʻl-Raĥmān.

Abū ʻl-Shaikh quotes Muhammad b. Ka`b ʻl-Quradhīi as saying: “Alif Lām Rā” are parts of the word ʻl-Rahmān. He also quotes him as saying “Alif Lām Mīm Sād” represent the words Allah, ʻl-Rahmān, and ʻl-śamad respectively. And he quotes Daĥĥāk as saying “Alif Lām Mīm śād” means ʻI am God, the Truthful’; others say that it means the Creator. And “Alif Lām Rā’” is said to mean: ʻI am God, the Omniscient, the Loftiest.’ Both these views are reported by Kirmāni in his work *ʻl-Gharā’ib*.

Hākim and others quote Ibn `Abbās on the authority of Sa`īd b. Jubair as saying in the verse “Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād” the kāf symbolizes the Noble, the hā’ the Guide, the yā’ the Wise, and `ain the Omniscient, and the śād the Truthful. And Hākim also quotes Ibn Abbās through another chain on the authority of Sa’īd as saying “Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād” symbolize the Self Sufficient, the Guide, the Trustworthy, and Mighty, and the Truthful. And Ibn Abū Hātim quotes Ibn `Abbās by way of Suddi, through Abu Mālik, and Abu Sālih; and through Murra he quotes Ibn Mas`ūd, and members of the Companions as saying “Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād” symbolize truncated letters: the Kāf represents King, the Hā, God, the ya and the `ain, the Mighty and the sād, the Creator. He also reports a similar commentary from Muhammad b. Ka`b except that the Sād represented the Eternal.

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[95] Baghawī, vol.1, p.44

And through a different source Sa`id b. Mansur and Ibn Mardawaih quote Ibn `Abbās on the authority of Sa`īd as saying: "Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād" stand for the Greatest, the Guide, the Trustworthy, the Mightiest, and the Most Truthful. And through Kalbī Ibn Mardawaih quotes Ibn `Abbās on the authority of Abū śālih as saying that in the verse"Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād" the kāf symbolizes the Sufficient, the Hā the Guide, the `Ain, the All Knowing, and the Sād, the Truthful. He also reports from Yūsuf b. Aţiyyah that on being asked about the verse: "Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād" Kalbi quotes Abu Sālih, who quotes Umm Hāni, who quotes the Prophet (s) as saying that these letters represent the Self Sufficient, the Guide, the Trustworthy, the Omniscient ,and the Truthful.

And with regard to the verse "Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād" `Ikrima as quoted by Ibn Abū Hātim said it means: "I am the Greatest, the Guide, the Loftiest, the Trustworthy, and the Truthful".

And the letter ţā in the verse: Ťāhā according to Muĥammad b. Ka`ab symbolizes the "Lofty One". And also according to him, in the verse "Tā Sīn Mīm" the *tā* symbolizes the "Lofty One" the *sīn* the Most Holy, and the *mīm*, the Beneficent. He also quotes Sa`id b. Jubair as saying that *hā'* in the verse "Hā Mim" is derived from *raĥmān* (the Beneficent), and the *mīm* from *raĥīm* (the Merciful). He also quotes Muhammd b. Ka`b who said that the *hā* and the *mīm* in the verse "Hā Mīm `Ain Sīn Qāf" are derived from *raĥmān*, the *`ain* from *l̄-`alīm* (the Omniscient), the *sīn* from *l̄-Quddūs* (the Most Holy), and the *qāf* from *l̄-qāhir* (the Victorious). He also quotes Mujahid as saying that the opening verses of the chapters are all truncated letters of the alphabet. He also quotes Sālim b. `Abd Allāh as saying that verses such as "Alif Lām Mim, Hā Mim, and Nun" are the truncated letters of God's name. And he quotes Suddi as saying: "the opening verses of the chapters are the Names of the Lord, Sublime is His Splendor, that are separated in the Qur'ān. . Kirmāni says with regard to the verse: "Qāf" that it is a letter from God's names the Omnipotent and the All Powerful. Others have said that the verse "Nun" is the key to the names of the Almighty, the Light, and the Helper.

All of the foregoing views are based on one idea: that these letters represent truncated words, each letter being derived from one of the names of the Almighty. Confining one's self to a few letters only is common to the Arabic language. Thus one finds a poet saying:

I said to her stop! She replied, I have! (Qāf)

Another said:
Good is reciprocated with even more good and evil with evil (fa)
I have no desire for evil except if you do (ta)
The letters *fa* and *ta* are truncated forms of the words fa sharr and tashā'
Another said:
He addressed them: Will you not put on the bridle, will you not mount (ta)
Together, they all said: Come Along! Let's mount (fa)
the words *ta* and *fa* are intended to imply *tarkabūn* and *fa irkabū*

This is the view preferred by Zajjāj, who said: "Arabs utter a single letter that points to the word whence it is derived. Ibn Aţiyya reports others as saying that these opening letters refer to the Greatest Name (*'l-ism 'l-a`zam*) except that we know not for certain whether it is so derived. Ibn Jarir, by way of an authentic tradition also quotes Ibn Mas`ūd to the effect that these letters refer to the Greatest name. And with regard to the verse "Alif Lām Mim" Ibn Abū Ĥātim quotes 'l-Rabī` b. Anas on the authority of Suddi as saying that is of God's Greatest Names.

Ibn Jarīr and others quote Ibn `Abbās on the authority of `Ali b. Abū TalĤah as saying : "Verses such as "Alif Lām Mim", ţā Sīn Mīm", "and "Sād" are Names of God that He uses as oaths. That these letters together, are the Names of God, may be considered the third explanation, though it is also possible that it is but a part of the first or the second explanation. Ibn `Aţiyya and others believe it is the former. And this is supported by a report in Ibn Mājah 's section on exegesis in which Nāfi`   Quotes Abu Nu`aim 'l-Qāri', who quotes  Fātima b. `Ali b. Abu Tālib who heard `Ali b. Abu Tālib say "O! "Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād" Forgive me!. Another is the report by Ibn Abū Hātim that Rabi` b, Anas said that the verse "Kāf Hā Yā `Ain Sād" means: "O! Ye who protects, and from whom there is no protection! He also quotes Ashhab as saying: "I asked Mālik b. Anas, 'Does it behoove one to be named Yā Sin? He said 'I think not, for in saying "Yā Sin! I swear by the Qur'ān, the Most Wise! God is saying: 'Here is My name. Thus have I been named.'

`Abd 'l-Razzāq, on the authority of Qatāda reports a view stating that much like *'l-Furqān* and *'l-Dhikr* this too is a name for the Qur'ān. And Ibn Abū Hātim quotes a similar view, thus: "All the truncated letters appearing in the Qur'ān are from the names of the Qur'ān.". Another view is that they are the names of the chapters. Thus is reported by Māwardi and others on the authoirty of Zaid b. Aslam . The author of ‘l-Kashshāf ascribes this view to the majority of scholars. It has also been said that like words such as *bal* (nay!) and *la bal* (No! But!) which appear at the beginning of poems these words too are opening statements of the chapters . Ibn Jarīr reports through Thaurī from Ibn Abū Najīĥ that Mujāhid said: “Alif, Lām, Mim; Hā, Mim; Alif, Lām, Mim, Sād; Sād” and other such letters are opening statements God uses to begin the Qur’ān”. Abu ‘l-Shaikh reports through Ibn Juraij that Mujāhid had said: “Alif, Lām, Mim; and Alif, Lām, Mim, Rā ” are introductory statements whereby God opens the Qur’ān. I asked: “Did he not say that they were the names of God?” He said: “No!” One view is that these are the letters that are assigned a numerical value and they point to the age of this Community.

Ibn Ishāq quotes Kalbi, who quotes Abu Sālih, who quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying that Jābir b. `Abd Allah b. Riyāb said: “Abu Yāsir b. Akhtab in the company of Jews passed by the Prophet (s) while he was reciting the opening verses of the chapter ‘l-Baqara: “Alif, Lām, Mim! dhālika ‘l-kitab lā raiba fīhi”[96](2: 1) He then approached his brother Huyayy b. ‘l-Akhtab who was with a group of the Jews, and said: I have just listened to Muhammad recite from among the verses revealed to him, the verse: “Alif, Lām, Mim! This is the Book. . .” He said: “Did you hear that! He replied: Yes!” Huyayy then walked along with these people to the Prophet (s) and said “Do you recall reciting from that which was revealed to you, the verse: “Alif, Lām, Mim! This is the Book. . .” He said: “Indeed!” They Said: “God has sent down several prophets but we know of none besides yourself who has been told the period of his rule, and the extent to which his community will last. In your case it is as follows: “the Alif represents one, the Lām, thirty, and the Mim, forty; together they add up to seventy one years! Should we enter the Faith of a prophet whose reign will last no longer than seventy one years!” He then asked: “O! Muhammad! Are there other letters besides these?” He said: “Yes! ““Alif, Lām, Mim, Sād”. He said: “This is longer and heavier: the alif, equals one, the lām, thirty, the mim, forty, and the sād, sixty; together, they add up to one hundred and thirty years. Do you have others besides these?” he asked. He said “Yes! “Alif, Lām, Rā” He said: “This is longer and heavier: the alif, equals one, the lām, thirty, and the rā, two hundred. Together, they add up to two hundred and thirty one. Do you have others besides these?" he asked. He said "Yes! "Alif, Lām, Mim, Rā" He said: "This is longer and heavier: the alif, equals one, the lām, thirty, the mim, forty, and the rā, two hundred. Together, they add up to two hundred and seventy one. No doubt," he went on to say, "this is quite confusing to us; we know not whether your reign will be long or short." He then said to his group: "Lets leave him!" and turning to his brother Abu Yāsir and those with him, he said: "Who knows! Perhaps these together, have been granted to Muhammad: seventy one, one hundred and thirty one, two hundred and thirty one, and two hundred and seventy one--together, this comes to seven hundred and four years. The truth about him is confusing to us!" It is for this reason that some scholars have opined that the following verse was revealed in reference to them: "He it is who sent down the Book to you; some of it comprises of the categorical verses (*āyāt muĥkamāt*)--these are basic to the Book--and others, the allegorical (*mutashābihāt*).[i] Whilst Ibn Jarīr quotes this tradition through this chain, Ibn 'l-Mundhir does so by way of Ibn Juraij. (muďalan)

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[96] This is the Book in which there is no doubt. . .”

With regard to the verse "Alif, Lām, Mim" Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abū Ĥātim quote Abu 'l-`Āliyya as saying: "These three are of the twenty nine commonly used letters; each one of them is a key to the Almighty's names, each one is indicative of His Blessings, and His trials, each points to the fate of nations and their demise. The *alif* is a key to His name , Allah, the *lām* a key to His name Laţīf, and the *mīm* a key to His name Majīd. The *alif* represents the Blessings of God, the l*ām* the Benevolence of God, and the *mim* the Majesty of God. The *alif* equals one year, the l*ām* thirty, and the *mim* forty years. Khuwayyī has said: "From the verse: 'Alif, Lām, Mim! Rome has sufffered a defeat." (30:2) some scholars had deduced that Jerusalem would fall to the Muslims in the year 583, and so it came to pass. Suhailī said: "It would seem that the sum of all the opening letters less those that are repeated indicates the longevity of this community.

Ibn Hajar has said: "This is baseless and should be disregarded given Ibn Abbās's warning against divination through the numerical values of letters, and the implication that this is tantamount to witchcraft. And this is not far fetched given the absence of any Islamic corroboration thereto. In his travelogs Qādi Abu Bakr b. 'l-`Arabi states: "The science of the truncated opening letters of the chapters is baseless" I have collected some twenty opinions or more on this topic; in none of them is anything definitive said about them, nor are any of them specially appealing to the intellect.

But I maintain that if these letters had no collective relevance to the Arabs they would have been among the first to object to the Prophet (s). He recited “Hā Mim” also known as *Fussilat*, to them along with verses such as “Sād”, and they voiced no objections; instead, theirs was an unequivocal acknowledgement of the purity and the eloquence of the Qur’an, notwithstanding their ardent desire to see him falter and stumble. This points to the fact that this was definitely a practice common to them.”

Then there is the view of Ibn Atiyya, which goes against the ‘opening letters’ argument, and suggests that, as in the use of the vocative call, these letters too, serve to capture attention. Abū `Ubaida however, states that: “Alif Lām Mīm” are opening statements.” “The view that these letters are meant to capture attention is a sound one” says Khuwayyī “because the Qur’an is mighty speech and its benefits are indeed, enormous.. These words therefore, must fall on attentive ears. It is thus, altogether plausible that God was aware that the Prophet (s) was sometimes distracted by worldly matters and so ordered Gabriel to proclaim on his descent: “Alif Lām Mim”, “Alif Lām Ra”, and “Hā Mim”. This way, he was able to heed Gabriel’s voice, turn towards him, and give him his full attention. Popular words like *alā*, and *amma*, that are generally used to draw attention were not used because they belong to the genre of words common among people. The Qur’ān however, is speech like no other; it is thus appropriate that it should draw attention by coining words that are peculiar, and that carry a ring that is unmistakable.”

It has also been suggested that because the Arabs were wont to mock the Qur’an on hearing its words God revealed this unique arrangement to capture their attention, give them more reason to listen to whatever else followed, and, ultimately to bring about a softening of their hearts. Some scholars regard the latter a separate, independent, opinion, but the converse seems more likely because of the similarities this view shares with some of the foregoing opinions.

It has been said that these letters are mentioned to point to the fact that the Qur’an comprises of the letters a, b. t. tha. . . some of which have appeared separately. They also appear together, as a single compilation, to show the natives of the language of the Qur’an that it comprised of no more than the letters known to them. They also serve to reproach them, and prove to them their inability to replicate that which uses letters common to them, letters which they use to fashion their speech.

Another view is that these letters, of which fourteen, that is half of the total number, are mentioned, are meant to highlight the letters that go towards the construction of speech. Of each kind one half has been mentioned. Thus, of the lower throat letters the ĥā’, the `ain, and the hā’ are mentioned, of the upper throat letters, the qāf, and the kāf, of the lip letters the mīm, of the whispered letters, the sīn, the ĥā’, the kāf, the sād, and the hā’; of the shadida, the hamza, the ţā’, the qāf, and the kāf, of the muţbiqa the ţā’, and the sād; of the majhūra letters the hamza, the mīm, the lām, `ain, the rā’, the ţā’, the qāf, the yā’, and the nūn; of the munfatiĥa, the hamza, the mīm, the rā, the kāf, the ĥā’, the `ain, the sīn, the hā’, the qāf, the yā’, and the nūn; of the musta`liya the qāf, the sād, and the ţā’; of the munkhafida the hamza, the lām, the mām, the rā, the kāf, the ĥā, the yā, the `ain, the sīn, the hā, the nūn; and of the shaking letters the qāf, and the ţā.[97]

Also significant is the fact that the Almighty mentioned these letters, singly, in twos, threes, fours, and fives, because words are fashioned in this way; they are made up of no more than five however.

Another view is that these letters were preordained for the People of the Book as a sign to them that He will send to Muhammad a Book whose opening letters will be truncated.

This is what I have been able to unravel about the truncated letters; with regard to some of them however, the following views have been presented. Thus, as has been mentioned already in the declinable words, Tā Hā, and Yā Sin mean O! man, O! Muhammad, or O! Human Being! They may also be two names of the Prophet (s). Kirmānī, in his work *ʾl-Gharāʾib*, asserts that this view is strengthened by the recitation of the *n* sound of the letter *sin* with a *fatha*, and the reading in one place Āl Yāsin. Another view is that Tā Hā is an imperative form of the verb meaning: O! Earth! incline! Or be placid! with the *ha* serving as the object, as a stop, or as a substitute for the hamza. Ibn Abū Ĥātim reports through Sa`īd b. Jubair from Ibn Abbās that Tā Hā is tantamount to one saying, ‘do!’. Kirmani also mentions in his work *ʾl-Gharaʾib* that Tā Hā means O! Full Moon! This is because the letter ţā therein has a value of nine and the hā, a value of five; together they add up to fourteen, an allusion to when the moon is full.

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[97] These terms, which belong to the rules of recitation or *tajwīd*, refer to the manner in which a letter is to be pronounced.

Another view is that the letters Yā Sin mean O! Master of the Messengers, and that the letter Sād! means: God has spoken the truth, or ‘I swear in the name of the Eternal, the Creator, and the Truthful One’. Or if the śād is regarded as the imperative form of ‘l-musādāt then it would mean ‘O! Muhammad! Compare your actions to the Qur’ān’. Kirmāni also quotes Hussain as having said that it means ‘Peruse the events of the Qur’an’, that is, ponder over them’. He quotes Sufyān b. Husain as saying that Hassan used to recite the verse in question as “Compare the Qur’ān”. Kirmāni also reports that sād is the name of a sea upon which is the Throne of God, or that it is a sea that resurrects the dead, or it means, ‘Muhammad entraps the hearts of the believers.’

He also reports that the letters “Alif Lām Mim Sād” are said to represent the verse “Have We not caused your chest to dilate”(94:1). And the verse “Hā Mim refers to the Prophet (s), or to all that has been created. Hā Mim `Ain Sin Qāf”, as reported by `Abd ‘l-Razzāq on the authority of Mujāhid, is a reference to Qāf, a mountain, or that “Qāf” is a mountain surrounded by land. It is also suggested that it means “I swear by the strength of Muhammad’s heart, or that it represents the letter qāf , and the ensuing discourse in the verse ‘the matter has been decided’(12:41). Another, is that it means “Stand! And set forth, O! Muhammad! And discharge the mandate, and act, as I have instructed. Both these views are quoted by Kirmānī.

It is said that the letter *nūn* represents the fish: Tabarānī quotes a *marfu`* tradition in which Ibn `Abbās said: “the first things created by God are the Pen and the Fish. He said: “Write!” It said: “What should I write?” He said: “All that is decreed to occur until the Last Day.” He then recited: “Nun! By the Pen. . .” (68:1) The letter nun thus, represents the fish. and the *qāf* the pen. Kirmani also reports from Jāhiz that the letter qāf represents the pen. Another view reported by Ibn Jarīr from among the *mursal* traditions of Ibn Qurra is that the qāf represents the Divine Tablet. One report from Hasan and Qatāda states that it is the ink pot, or the ink itself, as reported by Ibn Qutaiba in his work *ʾl-Gharīb*. Another view reported by Ibn `Asākir, in work *ʾl-*

Mubhamāt, is that it is of the names of the Prophet (s). In the *‘l-Muhtasab* of Ibn ‘l-Jinni Ibn `Abbās is reported to have recited the verse “Hā Mim `Ain Sīn Qāf” by omitting the letter `ain, whilst saying that the letter *sīn* represents all sects that will emerge and the qāf, every group. This, says Ibn ‘l-Jinni, is evidence that the opening verses act as pauses to divide the chapters. If they were the names of God it would not have been permissible to alter the verse. Proper nouns must be pronounced as is, without any distortions, or else they are not considered proper names. In his work *‘l-Gharā`ib*, Kirmānī asserts that the interrogative statement that appears after the verse “Alif Lām Mim! Do people believe. . “ (29:2) points to the fact that the truncated letters in all their appearances, are separate from the verses that follow:

Conclusion

Some scholars have asked if muĥkam verses hold distinction over the mutashābih in some significant way. If one answers in the negative then this contradicts the unanimous opinion of the community (ijmā`), they claim, and if one answers in the affirmative then one stands accused of going against one’s own principle, that the word of God is uniform in its entirety and has been revealed with wisdom!

In response `Abd Allāh ‘l-Bakrabāzī says that the two are alike in some regards and different in others: both require that before being used as proof texts the Divine intent must be isolated; also, an improper intent must not be given preference. They differ in that muĥkam verses, linguistically speaking, allow but one interpretation; thus, whosoever listens to them will be able to deduce their intent with immediate effect. But in order to steer the mutashābih verses in the right direction deliberation and reflection are required. Also, the muĥkam verses are the essence of the Qur’ān, and they therefore enjoy priority. Furthermore, these verses are known in all their details whilst the mutashābih are known only in broad terms.

“What possible benefit accrues in including in a work meant to be a guide and an explication material that is allegorical?” some ask. One perceives many benefits in symbolic narratives that promise knowledge. They serve to encourage scholars to reflect upon the deeper meanings of the Qur’ān, and to unravel its complexities, because doing so is an act of supreme piety. It also allows multiple levels of comprehending the Qur’ān, which is not the case with the muĥkam verses alone. Without this, all opinions would have equal weight, and scholars would enjoy no special significance.

There are benefits even where nothing definitive is known. For instance, such verses may serve as tests to the faith of the servants of God, and their willingness to submit to God, to defer to His omniscience. And, as in the case of abrogated verses, they worship Him by engaging in the recitation of such verses, even though acting upon such verses or basing arguments on them is impermissible. All of this shows that this is indeed the Word of God and that it is He who rendered those in whose language these verses were revealed incapable of aspiring to their meaning; this, despite their eloquence and intelligence.

Imām Fakhr ‘l-Din Rāzi said: “The Qur’ān is a target for apostates because it contains allegorical verses. They say: “You claim that till the end of time people are bound to follow the Qur’ān, but we find that members of every sect align themselves to it in support of their individual sects. To support their sect the Jabariyya invoke verses such as: “wa ja`alnā `alā qulūbihim akinnatan an yafqahūhu wa fī ādhānihim waqran”[98](6:25). The Qadariyya, denigrate the latter as infidels through verses such as: “wa qālū qulūbunā fī akinnatin min mā tad`ūnā ilaihi wa fī ādhāninā waqran”[99](41:5), and the verse: “wa qālū qulūbunā ghulf”[100](2:88) which they claim that God, by way of rebuke, had revealed about this sect. Those who claim that God can never be seen quote the verse: “lā tudrikuhu ‘l-abśār”[101](6:103). Those who claim that He occupies space quote the verse, “yakhāfūna rabbahum min fauqihim”[102] (16:50) and the verse, “‘l-raĥmān `alā ‘l-`arsh istawā”[103] (20:5). And those who deny this view quote the verse, “laisa ka mithlihī shay’un”[104] (42:11) Further, verses that support one’s own doctrine are labeled muĥkam and those that do not are labeled mutashābih; this entire effort to prioritize some verses over others is predicated on tenuous choices and flimsy arguments. Does it behoove the Wise One to put in place a Book such as this, one that is supposed to be a point of reference for all faiths, through the end of time!

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[98] “We have placed veils on their hearts and deafness in their ears. . .”

[99] “They say: ‘Our hearts are protected from that which you invite towards, and our ears are deaf”

[100] “And they say our hearts are covered.”

[101] “Vision cannot comprehend Him”

[102] “They fear their Lord, above them.”

[103] “The Beneficent One who is firmly entrenched on His Throne.”

In response, he said: “Scholars have pointed to several benefits of the mutashābih verses, not least, that in unraveling its intent much energy will have to be expended; this, in and of itself, garners added spiritual rewards. Also, if entirely muĥkam, the Qur’ān would have endorsed but one view and condemned all others. Those who subscribed to the latter views would then have been alienated from it and disinclined to seek benefit therefrom. Having both the muĥkam and the mutashābih encourages members of the various sects to seek endorsements for their views therein. They are consequently inclined to delve deeply into its meaning; and when they do so the muĥkam verses become a commentary for the mutashābih verses; their falsehood is thus invalidated and they are able to reach the truth. Also, by embracing the mutashābih the Qur’ān provides additional benefits, such as a need to know a variety of topics. These include a need to know how to interpret and prioritize verses, to know about syntax and etymology, about rhetoric, and about jurisprudence; without these verses knowledge of such topics would remain irrelevant.

Finally, the Qur’ān comprises of material that addresses both the elite and the laity. Given that those in the latter category are generally inclined to shun discussions that unravel ultimate realities, it may be that arguments designed to prove the incorporeality of the Divine would instead lead them to denying the very existence of God. It was thus fitting that words that speak frankly about realities be mixed with others that in some way appeal to the common way of thinking. The former, which is expressed in broad terms is known as the mutashābihāt, whilst the latter which unravels the truth in explicit terms is known as the muĥkamāt.

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[104] “Nothing resembles Him. . .”

Al-Ijāz and Al-Itnāb

(Brevity and Prolixity)

Know that this is indeed, the greatest form of rhetoric (*balāgha*), so much so that the author[1] of the work *Sirr al-Fasāha* quotes scholars as saying that all rhetoric is īјāz and itnāb. The author of the work *ʻl-Kashshāf* had this to say: "Just as it is important for an articulate person to know how to be brief and to transpose, so too, is it required of him, where necessary, that he be prolix, and informative. Jāhiz once recited:

They rebuff, at times with lengthy sermons, and at others with ponderous gazes,
the dread of the watchful.

Scholars disagree about whether some middle point known as musāwāt exists between brevity and prolixity. Or is it that musāwāt is just a subcategory of brevity? Sakāki[2] and others are of the former opinion but they maintain that this is neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy. In their view musāwāt is the idiom of the laity, those that is, who remain less than articulate. And they define brevity as the art of conveying meaning with fewer words than normal, and prolixity, with more words than normal. Ibn al-Athir[3] and others are of the latter view, and they say: "brevity is to convey meaning with an economy of words while prolixity is to use more words than are required."

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[1] Abu Muhammad, Abd Allah b. Muhammad al-Khafāji (d. 466h.)

[2] Al-Sakāki, Abu Ya`qub, Yusuf, b. Abu Bakr b. `Ali al-Khawārizmi (d.626h.)

[3] Ibn Al-Athīr, Diyā al-Dīn, Muhammad b. Muhammad b. `Abd al-Wāhid

Qazwini[4] said: “to be precise it must be said that the acceptable mode of communicating intent is where justice is done to the original idea. This occurs by usage of words equal to the original intent, or less than yet sufficient to convey such intent, or more than but for some specific purpose. The first case is termed musāwāt, the second, ijāz, and the third, itnāb. In the foregoing definition the word *wāf* is used to preclude any breach in meaning, and the words *li fāida* to preclude superfluousness and interpolation. In his view therefore, linkage is evidence of the existence of musāwāt; it is also an acceptable category.

Why it may be asked, is there no mention of equivalence, in the definition? Is it because you are inclined to deny it, or to not accept it, or is there some other reason? I would respond by saying it is for these two reasons and one more, which is that equivalence is hardly ever present, especially in the Qur’ān. An example of this has been provided in the work al-Talkhis[5] by way of the verse: “Wa lā yaĥīq ‘l-makr ‘l-sayyi’ illā bi ahlihī” [6](35:43) and in the work al-Idāh by way of the verse: “Wa idhā ra’aita alladhīna takhūdūna fī āyātina” [7](6:68). In response it has been said that in the second verse the object of the adjective *alladhīna* is omitted. And in the first verse there is prolixity in the form of the word *‘l-sayy*, because the word ‘scheme’ (*makr*) is itself used only in an evil sense. This may also be considered a case of brevity by omission if the exceptional clause is regarded as *ghair mufarrigh* or non-exhaustive. In this case the omitted words will be *bi ahad*, and brevity would be achieved by truncating the exceptional clause. The statement is couched as incentive to prevent the persecution of all people, and to warn against all that cause this. And in implying grave harm to its perpetrator, the statement takes the form of a And this would be a case of brevity by , that is, the statement “only those” (*illa bi ahlihi*) refers to each one of them. This discussion has been stylized as a *tab`iyya* metaphor that appears in the form of a *tamthiliyya* metaphor, because the word *yahīq*, which means encompasses, is used only to refer to physical bodies.

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[4] Al-Qazwīnī, Jalāl al-Dīn, Muhammad b. `Abd al-Rahmān

[5] Al-Sakāki, Jalāl al-Din Muhammad b. `Abd al-Rahmān b. `Umar al-Qazwini, *Talkhis al-Miftāh* The autor is also known as Khatib Dimashq (d.739h.)

[6] “And the evil scheme encompasses only those who perpetrate it

[7] “And when you observe those who dabble in our verses. . . ”

Note that the words *ijāz* and *ikhtisār*, as noted in the work *'l-Miftāh*, and endorsed by 'l-Tibī, have the same meaning. Others however, contend that the word ikhtisār as opposed to ijāz, is restricted to the omission of sentences. But the shaikh, Bahā 'l-Din considers this as being without merit. With regard to *itnāb*, the word is said to have the same meaning as *ishāb*; the truth however, as al-Tanukhi and others have pointed out, is that ishāb is simply verbosity with or without justification.

Section

Ijāz has two forms: *qasr* and *ĥadhf*. The first form uses words sparingly. The shaikh, Bahā 'l-Dīn said: "If a brief statement is part of one that is lengthier it is termed *ījāz hadhf* or brevity by omission, but if it conveys a meaning that is greater than the sum of its words then it is termed *ījāz qasr* or brevity by abridgment. Some scholars assert that *ījāz qasr* is to augment meaning by reducing words, while others state that it is when the ratio of meaning to words is fewer than normal. Its elegance lies in it indicating skillful eloquence. This is why the Prophet (s) said: 'I have been granted all round eloquence."

Al-Tībī in the work 'l-Tibyān[8] had this to say: "Brevity free of omission falls into three categories:

1- Brevity by Abridgment (*Ījāz 'l-Qasr)*: it is to restrict the usage of the number of words in a statement to its meaning. This is the case in the verse: Innahū min Sulaimān. . .wa i'tūnī muslimīn" [9](27:30-31) Together, these words represent the heading, the contents and its justification. One eloquent description of the verse states: "Its words constitute the mold for its meaning." I maintain that this is the view of those who regard *musāwāt* as being in the category of *ījāz*.

2- Brevity by Implication*(Ījāz al-Taqdir)*: This is to imply a meaning that exceeds the sum of the spoken words. This category is also known as *'l-Tadyīq* or contraction, and it has been so described by Badr 'l-Dīn b. Mālik in the work *'l-Misbāh* because the number of words together, are fewer than the sum total of its meaning. This is so in the verse: "Fa man jā'ahū mau`izat min rabbihī fa lahū mā salaf”[10](2:275). This means: “His errors I forgive”. This is thus an admonishment for him and not against him. Another example is the verse: “Hudan li ‘l-muttaqīn” [11](2:2); that is, for those who after being misguided and in manifest error move towards consciousness (*taqwa*).

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[8] Sharaf al-Din Muhammad b. `Abd Allah al-Tibi (d.773h.), *al-Tibyān fi al-Bayān*

[9] "Lo! It is from Solomon. . .come to me submissively."

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[10], “For him unto whom admonishment comes from his Lord, and he then desists, his past is overlooked.”

[11] “a guidance for the cognizant. . .”

3- Comprehensive Brevity(*‘l-Ījāz ‘l-Jāmi`)*: This is where one word connotes several meanings as in the verse: Inna Allāh ya’mur bi ‘l-`adl wa ‘l-iĥsān”[12](16:90) The word *`adl* is actually the straight path, the middle way between over indulgence and austerity that is attested to in all compulsory acts pertaining to dogma, ethics, and worship. *Ihsān* is the exercise of sincerity in compulsory acts of worship, as indicated in the *ĥadith* “(*ihsān*) is to worship God as if you behold Him. . .” or worship Him alone as far as your reasons go, stand in humility, and make all the necessary preparations for prayer. As for the verse that follows: “wa ītā’ dhi ‘l-qurbā”[13] which is a voluntary giving that supercedes the obligatory duty. All of the above stem from the imperative forms in the verse. As for the prohibitive form: the word *‘l-fahshā’* alludes to sexual desire, *‘l-munkar* to the immoderation that results from the effects of anger, or to all acts prohibited by the law, and *‘l-baghyi* alludes to a haughtiness that is based on delusion.

I maintain that this is certainly why Ibn Mas`ud as reported in the work *‘l-Mustadrak* had the following to say: “There is in the Qur’ān no verse more comprehensive in describing virtue and vice than this one.” Baihaqī reports in the section on the branches of faith that Hasan was once reading this verse when he stopped and said: “God has incorporated all virtue and all vice in a single verse. By God! He has not omitted to include a single aspect pertaining to justice and virtue; nor has He omitted to include immoral and unjust acts of disobedience to God.” And he reports, on the authority of Ibn Abu Shihāb, a tradition similar in meaning to one reported by Bukhārī and Muslim, which states: “I have been dispatched with an all encompassing speech.” He was told that this all encompassing speech (*jawām` ‘l-kilam*) referred to God having compressed several rules which were previously spelled out into no more than a rule or two.

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[12] “Lo! God enjoins justice (*`adl*) and virtue (*ihsān*). . .”

[13] “. . .and giving to the close relatives. . .”

Another example is the verse: “Khudh ‘l-`afwa” [14](2:199) which encapsulates righteous behavior. This is because in applying clemency to matters of rights forbearance and lenience is required, whilst, when inviting to the Faith compassion and kindness are required. It is also required that one refrain from injuring others, forgive, and avoid all illegal practices when enjoining the good, and that one exercise restraint, kindness and love when turning away from others.

Another splendid example of ījāz is the chapter: “Qul huwa Allāh aĥad” [15](112:1) for it is the ultimate elimination of anthropomorphism. And as Bahā’ ‘l-Dīn b. Shaddād has made clear in a separate work, it serves as a rebuttal to the assertions of over forty different sects.

And in the verse: “Akhraja minhā mā’ahā wa mar`āhā” [16](79:31) these two terms allude to all foods and provisions He provides for mankind from the earth itself: these include pasture, trees, seeds, fruit, the stalk and the leaves of grain, firewood, clothing, fire, and salt--the latter two because fire comes from wood and salt from water.

And in the verse: “Lā yuśadda`ūna `anhā wa lā yunzafūn” [17](56:19) He has brought together all the debilities of wine, including hangovers, irrationality, loss of material possessions and the wastage of drinks. And in the verse: “Wa qīla yā ard ‘ibla`ī mā’akī” [18](11:44) God orders and forbids, informs and addresses, praises and names, destroys and preserves, gladdens and saddens, and relates stories containing a metaphor, rhetoric, brevity, prolixity, and such eloquence that describing them would exhaust the ink of pens. Separate works describing the eloquence of this verse have been compiled, and Kirmāni, for instance, states in his work *‘l-`Ajā’ib* that critics concur wholeheartedly with the claim that matching this verse is beyond human capacity, They reached this conclusion after painstakingly scrutinizing all languages, both Arab and non-Arab. They found nothing comparable to the loftiness of its words, the beauty of its syntax, and the excellence of its diction in portraying images without impairment and with an economy of words.

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[14] “Hold fast to clemency. . . “

[15] “Say! He is God, the One. . .”

[16] “He extracts therefrom water and its pasture.”

[17] “they suffer no headaches because of it nor do they become delusional.”

[18] “Then it was said: “O! Earth! Now swallow up your water. . .”

In the verse: “Yā ayyuha ‘l-naml ‘udhkhulū masākinakum” [19](27:18) eleven forms of speech are included: these conceal, notify, order, narrate, warn, specify, generalize, allude to, and absolve They are as follows: interjection, as in “yā’”; metonomy, as in “ayy”; annotation, as in “ha”; appellation, as “‘l-naml”; the imperative form, as in “udkhulu”; narrative, as in “masākinakum”; warning, as in “lā yahtimannakum”; specification, as in “sulaimān”; generalization, as in “junūduhū”; intimation, as in “wa hum”; and excuse, as in “la yash`urūn”. These, together, effectuate five rights: the right of God, the right of His Messenger, the (ant’s) right, the right of its citizens, and the right of Solomon’s army.

The verse: “Yā Banī Adam khudū zīnatukum `inda kull musjid”[20] (7:31) encompasses the basis of speech, including the interjection, the generalization, the specification, the imperative, the lawful, the unlawful, and the communication. Some have said that in just one part of the following verse God has collected all wisdom: ‘Kulū wa ishrabū wa lā tusrifū”[21](7:31) And the verse: “Wa auĥainā ilā umm Mūsā an ardi`īhi” [22](7:31) as Ibn ‘l-`Arabi explains, is “Of the greatest of the verses of the Qur’ān in eloquence; this because it contains two each of the imperative, the prohibitive, the communicative, and the annunciative forms.

With regard to the verse: “Fa isda` bimā tumar” [23](15:94) Ibn Abu ‘l-Isbi` has said that it means: make known all that has been revealed to you, and convey that which you have been ordered to, even if this happens to be so difficult on some souls that they shatter. The similarity between the word sd`a (to split asunder) and the act of proclaiming is in the effect the latter has on the heart; this is reflected on the face as dejection and relief and is etched thereon in the form of rejection or delight, just as it is reflected on a cracked mirror. Consider the sublimity of this metaphor, the profundity of its brevity and the multiplicity of meanings it encompasses! One bedouin is known to have fallen into prostration on hearing this verse, and saying: “I prostrate to the eloquence of this speech!”

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[19] “O! Colony of ants! Go into your dwellings. . .”

[20] “O! Progeny of Adam! Take with you your adornments to all places of worship. . .”

[21] “Eat, and drink, but not in excess. . .”

[22] “And We inspired the mother of Moses thus: ‘Suckle him. . .”

[23] “Proclaim (lit. split asunder) all that you have been ordered to. . .”

And one scholar has said: “And by using these two words (*tashtahi* and *taladhd*) in the following statement of the Almighty: “ Wa fīhā mā tashtahīhi ‘l-anfus wa taladhdh ‘l-a`yun”[24](43:71) He has encompassed the description of that which would have exhausted the abilities of all humans combined.

Then there is the verse: “Wa lakum fi ‘l-qisās ĥayāt”[25] (2:179) which despite its economy of words, has a multiplicity of meanings. In knowing that the taking of life would result in the loss of his own man would be deterred from murder. Thus in the killing that is part of the laws of talion many other killings are prevented, and this gives life to them as a whole. The foregoing verse when compared to Arab society’s most concise statement on this topic, *‘l-qatl anafa li ‘l-qatl* or “one killing precludes another”, was found to be superior in at least twenty or more different ways. Ibn ‘l-Athir however disavows all such comparisons saying “There can be no comparison between the words of God and the words of creation--this is no more than the perceptions of scholars torturing their minds. These Twenty are:

I. The number of letters in the verse in question is fewer than in the statement of the Arabs: the number of letters in the former is ten while in the latter it is fourteen

II. Negating the act of killing does not necessitate the conferring of life. The verse however, affirms this idea which after all is the purpose of the act itself.

III. Using the word h*ayāt* without the definite article serves to amplify its significance and to underscore the idea that the law of talion provides eternal life. This word is used thus in the verse: “wa latajidannahum aĥras ‘l-nās `alā ĥayāt” [26](2:96) The same is not true for the proverb for the letter *lā* therein points to a genus. This is why the word hayāt therein is explained to mean survival.

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[24] “And therein is all that the heart desires and all that the eye delights in.”

[25] “And for you, in the laws of talion, there is life itself.”

[26] “You will certainly find them to be most covetous of an unending life”

IV. The verse, as opposed to the proverb, is in every way a deterrent. Not all killings prevent further killings; some such as unjust killings trigger ever more killings. It takes a particular kind of killing–one based on the law of talion–to protect the sanctity of life.

V. The verse, as opposed to the proverb, does not repeat the word *qatl*. A statement free of repetition is always superior to one not so free. This is true even if the repetition is not improper in terms of elocution.

VI. The verse dispenses with the need for an implied syntax, the proverb does not, for in it is implied the word *min* which appears after the superlative form and thereafter. Also implied are the words qisās attached to the first *qatl*, and the word *zulm* attached to the second *qatl*. The implication therefore would be: “*ʾl-Qatl qisāsan anfa li ʾl-qatl zulman min tarkihi*.”

VII. The verse, as opposed to the proverb, is juxtaposed, because the word talion imparts a sense of life, the opposite of death.

VIII. The verse contains elements of the science of metaphors, for it substitutes the word life where its antonym, the word, death should have appeared. This placement of the word *ʾl-hayāt* where *ʾl-maut* should have appeared is, according to the work *ʾl-Kashshāf*, an instance of profound hyperbole. The author of the work *ʾl-Idāh*, says that in positing the preposition *fi* before the word *ʾl-qisās* the verse has made talion a source for life itself and its treasure-trove.

IX. The proverb contains a pause after a short vowel (*tawāliya)* is frowned upon because if the short vowels of a word are in sequence it would facilitate its utterance, and show up its eloquence, as opposed to when the vowel is followed by a pause. The fluidity of movement of the short vowels is interrupted by pauses not unlike the movement of an animal which is frequently interrupted--the constant stop and go restricts the mobility of this animal and renders it captive.

X. The proverb is ostensibly a contradiction because things generally do not preclude themselves.

XI. The verse is also superior because it is devoid of the convulsions of the letter qāf (*qalqala*) which evince a sense of harshness and pressure. The verse is also free of the nasal sound of the letter nūn.

XII. The verse utilizes letters that are harmonious in terms of pronunciation. The letter *qāf* and the *sād* next to it are both high letters, as opposed to the letter *tā*, a low letter which is not in harmony with the *qāf* that precedes it. Similarly, there is greater harmony in the pronunciation of the *hā* after the *sād* than of the *hamza* after the *lām*; this because of the distance that exists between the edge of the tongue and the lower throat.

XIII. There exists a certain beauty in the utterance of letters such as the *sād*, the *hā'*, and the *tā'* which is not to be found in the repetition of the *qāf* with the *tā'.*

XIV. The verse is free of the word *qatl* which evokes images of barbarity, as opposed to *hayāt*, a word more consistent with human sentiments than *qatl*.

XV. As opposed to the unqualified use of the word *qatl* the word *qisās* evokes images of equality and justice.

XVI. The tone of the verse is affirmative, that of the proverb, negative; an affirmation is lofty, whilst a negation is secondary to it.

XVII. The proverb is unintelligible without an understanding of the idea that the laws of talion give life; in contrast, the verse "in the laws of talion is life. . ." is, immediately understood.

XVIII. Whilst the proverb contains a noun coined from the superlative form of the transitive verb *af`al*, the verse is free of this.

XIX. The *af`al* form of any word generally suggests a cause and effect relationship, and this would suggest that not retaliating would itself be a deterrent for killing, whereas it is retaliation that is the greater deterrent. The verse however, is free of this.

XX. Because the law of talion applies to both life and limb, the verse acts as a deterrent to both these acts. There is after all, life even in the retaliatory laws pertaining to bodily injuries, because the impairment of a limb deprives one of a full existence, and that may well deprive one of a meaningful life. The same is not true for the proverb. At the outset the verse uses the words 'for you' *(lakum)* and for a special purpose. It is a special gesture unto believers specifically, to show that it is their lives that are precious, even though the same may apply to others besides them.

Notes

Firstly, Qudāma includes intimation (*ishāra)* in the category of styles (*badi`*) He defines it as the process of using an economy of words to convey complex ideas. This however, is precisely, how the *qasr* form of brevity (ījāz)[27] is defined , although Ibn Abu ‘l-Isbi` distinguishes between the two. He says that in the case of brevity the words conform to the meaning, whereas in the case of intimation the words necessitate the same meaning or incorporate it. It is thus clear that the objective of the *ishāra* form is the same as that of the previously mentioned, explicit (*mantuq*) form.

Secondly, the judge Abu Bakr says in the work *I`jāz ʾl-Qur'an* that one form of brevity is *tadmin* which, according to him, “is to arrive at the meaning of a word without specifically using the word that refers to it. He said that this is of two kinds: firstly, that which is understood from the structure of the word itself; for example, the word known (*ma`lum)* necessarily implies a knower *(`ālim*). Secondly, that which is understood from the meaning of the sentence; for example, the statement, ‘In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful’ includes directives about the need to glorify and gain benedictions by invoking the name of God, Almighty during acts.

Thirdly, Ibn ‘l-Athīr, along with the author of the work *`Arus ʾl-Afrāh* and others contend that parenthetical statements in which particles such as *illā*, *innamā*, etc. are used, are one form of the *ījāz ʾl-qasr* In this case one statement is doing the work of two. Also belonging to this category are the following:

A. the conjunction, because it is used to obviate the need to restate a word that is governed by a regent. (*`āmil*);

B. the passive agent, because it points to the subject by assuming its performance, and to the object because it assumes the latter's position.

C. the pronoun, because it obviates the need to mention the subject explicitly, which is why the detached pronoun is not used for as long as the attached will suffice.

D. statements such as: *`alimtu annaka qāʾim*[28] because they employ one subject as a substitute for two objects without the omission of words. Also belonging to this category are the following:

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[27] The qasr form of ījāz incorporates a concise rendition of a multiplicity of meanings without elision.

[28] “I know that you are standing.”

- the *tanāzu`*, which in the opinion of 'l-Farrā' occurs if the subject of the verb is not implied[29].
- The plural of the interrogative and conditional particles. Thus the statement '*Kam māluka*?' dispenses with the need to add: '*a huwa `ishrun am thalātun*?' etc.
- words such as *ahadun* which of necessity, generalize.
- the dual and plural forms which appear in place of the singular form and obviate the need to repeat the singular. Their particles in both these cases substitutes for it.

Also appropriate to this category is the *ittisā`* form of *badi`* or style. The latter, as Ibn Abu 'l-Isbi` points out, refers to words whose letters offer some latitude in interpretation; such as is the case with the truncated letters.

Brevity by Elision

Elision, which is the second of two forms of brevity, offers many benefits, and for the following reasons:

A. Solely for brevity's sake and to prevent the superfluousness that the omitted words would otherwise have caused.

B. It gives notice that the time needed to present the elision has shrunk, and that any preoccupation therewith will lead to a loss of the objective. This in fact, is also the purpose of the warning *(tahdhir)* and persuasion *(ighrā')* categories, both of which appear in the verse: "Nāqat Allāh wa suqyāhā"[30](91:13) The words *nāqat Allah* serve to warn them that it should be left alone, while the words *suqyāhā* serve to persuade them to act accordingly.

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[29] "*Tanāzu`* refers to cases where the noun of a single sentence is both object and subject. An example os this would be: *darabanī zaid wa darabtuhū*"

[30] ". . .God's she-camel. . .let her drink"

C. Because of the ambiguity that elision engenders, it has the effect of exalting and amplifying In the work *Minhāj ʻl-Bulaghā’* Hāzim[31] asserted that where the evidence pointing to the omission is strong there the elision would be appropriate. Also appropriate is that instance where it may refer to several things whose enumeration would be laborious. In such a case it should be omitted and the context itself should suffice. This then gives the imagination an opportunity to rummage through the objects that are contingent on the context. He said: “It is for this reason that this is the preferred style in places where the objective is to impress and instill awe in minds and hearts.” One example is the Almighty’s statement: “ĥattā idhā jā’ahā wa futiĥat abwābuhā” [32](39:73) Here, the apodosis is omitted to emphasize the impossibility of describing what they find at that point; they are never ending. The mind is left to conjure images as would satisfy it. But even with this it would not reach the limits of what’s in there. The same is true for the verse: “Wa lau tarā idh wuqifū `ala ‘l-nār”[33](6:27), implying that you would then have seen a frightful event, one that cannot be put into words.

- Lessening the utterance of some common statements, as is the case in the verse: “Yūsuf! a`rid `an hādha”[34](12:29) where the exclamatory particle is omitted. Or in the verse: “lam yaku” [35](4:53) where the *nūn* is omitted. Or where it is supposed to be part of a sound plural, as in the verse: wa ‘l-muqimī ‘l-salāt” [36](22:35), or the letter *yā* in in the verse: “wa ‘l-lail idhā yasr” [37](89:4) When asked by the historian ‘l-Sadūsī about this verse ‘l-Akhfash said: “It is Arab custom in cases where digression from the meaning of a word occurs that word's letters are reduced. Thus, it is not the night that moves but rather, it is therein that movement takes place. Similarly, in the Almighty's statement: "wa mā kānat ummuki baghiyya"[38](19:28) Originally the word read (*baghiyyat*) but it lost a letter because of the change in subject.

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[31] Hazim b. Muhammad ‘l-Qurtājini is his full name

[32] “Thus when they get to it, and its doors are flung open. . .”

[33] “If only you could see them, staring at the Fire. . .”

[34] “Yusuf! Let this pass. . .”

[35] “Nor was he. . .”

[36] ‘ . . .And those who establish prayer.”

[37] “. . .And the night as it moves”

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[38] ". . .Nor was your mother a loose woman."

- Where only God is appropriate as subject, as in the verse: "`ālim ‘l-ghaib wa ‘l-shahādat"[39](6:73) and: "fa`āāl limā yurīd" [40](11:107)
- Where mentioning or omitting a word are all the same. Zamakhshari has said: "This is a case of the context providing the evidence; and this kind of evidence is more cogent than any explicit statement. This is how Hamza's recitation of the following verse is interpreted: "tasā'alūn bihī wa ‘l-arĥām(a)"[41] (4:1) Because the kasra appears so often in this spot the need to repeat the first part of the statement was obviated.
- To preserve the sanctity of God as in the verse "qāla fir`aun wa mā rabb ‘l-`ālamīn; qāla rabb ‘l-samāwāt"[42] (6:143)The subject in the verses that follow has been omitted in three places: before the word *rabb* in , i.e., *huwa rabb*;and in *Allahu rabb*; and in *Allahu rabb ‘l-mashriq*. Because Moses was alarmed at Pharaoh's imprudence, and his arrogance in asking such questions, he sought to exalt and sanctify God's name by not uttering it. In the work *`Arus ‘l-Afrāh* the following verse where the word *dhātaka* has been omitted, is given as an example: "Rabb! arinī! Andhur ilaika" [43](7:143)
- To show contempt for the subject, as in the verse "Summ bukmun" [44](2:18) This refers to ‘them' or to the ‘hypocrites'.

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[39] "The Knower of the unseen, and of that to which testimony is borne."

[40] "He absolutely does as He pleases"

[41] ". . .you demand your rights and also the ties of kinship."

[42] "Pharoah said: ‘What of the Sustainer of all the worlds. . .! He said: "He is the Sustainer of the Heavens. .

[43] "My Lord! Show Yourself to me, so that I may look at you."

[44] "Deaf, dumb. . ."

- To generalize, as in the verse: “wa iyyāka nasta`īn”[45](1:4) where the words ‘in our worship and in all other matters’ (*`ala ‘l-`ibāda wa `ala ‘umūrinā kullihā*) have been omitted. Another example is the verse “Wa Allāh yad`ū ilā dār ‘l-salām” [46](10:25) where the word ‘every person’ (*kull wāĥid*) is omitted.
- To maintain the rhyme, as in the verse: “mā wadda`aka rabbuka wa mā qalā” [47] (93:2), that is, ‘nor does He scorn you.’

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[45] “And You alone we turn to for help”

[46] “Whilst God calls to an abode of peace”

[47] “Your Sustainer has neither abandoned you nor does He scorn. . .”

- To explain in places that are equivocal. This is so in the case of *shā'a* in the verse "wa lau shā'a la hadākum"[48](27:9) the intent is 'if He so desired your guidance (*hidāyatukum*)". When one hears the words '*wa lau shā'a*' his mind anticipates, without being told, the speakers wish. It is the answer that provides a clarification of that wish. This occurs most often, after the conditional participle, because the accusative of a *shā'a* phrase is included in the apodosis. It also appears elsewhere as proof but without the apodosis, as in the case of the verse: "wa lā yuĥīţūn bi shay'in min `ilmihī illā bimā shā'a"[49](2:255) Scholars have asserted that the accusative of a *shā'a* phrase is only invoked in cases of strangeness or greatness, as in the verses: "liman shā'a minkum an yastaqīm" [50](81:28), and: "lau aradnā an nattakhidha lahwan"[51] (21:17) Of all the verbs it is the accusative of the *shā'a* phrase that is omitted most frequently, and this is because where there is desire there must also be the object of such desire. Thus, the *shā'a* phrase requiring the incorporation of an apodosis can only be an apodosis of desire. It is for this reason that in the omission of the object intent is much like desire. This has been said by Zamlakāni, and Tanukhi in the work *'l-Aqsa 'l-Qarib*. They said: "If the accusative after the particle '*lau*' is omitted, it is always mentioned in its apodosis. This is explained in the work *`Arūs 'l-Afrāh* through the verse "qālū lau shā'a rabbuna la 'anzala malā'ikat"[52] (41:14). The meaning of this verse is: 'If our Sustainer sought to send down messengers, He would surely have sent down angels.' The meaning is specific to this explanation.

Note

The shaikh `Abd 'l-Qāhir has said "In all cases where the noun ought to have been omitted it was because its omission was better than its mention. Ibn 'l-Jinnī calls elision the coaxing of the Arabic language because it coaxes conversation.

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[48] "And if He so desired. . . He would have guided you aright"

[49] "They cannot acquire any of His knowledge without His permission.'

[50] "for those among you who seek to be righteous.'

[51] 'If our Sustainer so desired He would surely have sent down angels'

Rule Pertaining to the Elision of the Accusative for Reasons of Abridgement (*Ikhtisār* and *Iqtisār*"

Ibn Hishām has said: "It is customary for grammarians to use the terms *ikhtisāran* and i*qtisāran* where the object is elided. The former refers to elisions based on evidence and the latter to elisions without evidence. The example they provide is the verse: "Kulū wa ishrabū" [53](52:19) that is, indulge in these two practices. On scrutinizing the opinions of the experts on eloquence it becomes clear that on occasion, only the occurrence of an act is intended, and not the subject of the act, nor the object. In such cases the infinitive is used attached to a general "to be"verb, and it is then said, for instance, 'a fire occurred' or a robbery. In other cases the intent is to inform by conveying that an act has been performed by the subject. This then suffices, and the accusative is not mentioned nor is it intended; for that which is intended is like that which is present. Nor should it be called elided, because the verb in such a case is reduced to being a verb without an object. Examples thereof are the verses:
i-"rabbī alladhī yuĥyī wa yumīt"[54](2:258) The meaning here is that it is my Lord who performs the giving and the taking of life.

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[53] "Eat and drink. ."

[54] "My Lord is the one who gives and takes life."

ii- “Qul hal yastawī alladhīna ya`lamūn wa alladhīna lā ya`lamūn”[55] (39:9) that is, “Are those described as having knowledge and those devoid of knowledge, equal?”
iii- “Kulū wa ishrabū wa lā tusrifū”[56] (7:31) that is, “Indulge in eating and drinking, and eschew wastefulness”
iv- “wa idhā ra’aita thamma ra’aita” [57](76:20) that is, when you are able to see.

Another verse is: “wa lammā warada mā’a madyan”[58](28:23) It should be clear that Moses (s) was being merciful to the two ladies, not because their task was to restrain, sheep whilst their people watered camels, but simply because they kept back whilst their people watered. Similarly, the intent in using the word “*lā nasqī*” is not to indicate that as a rule, they did not water animals, but to show that they had no access to water. One who is oblivious to this may interpret these verses as follows: ‘they have the right to water camels’; ‘they restrained their sheep’ and also ‘we do not water sheep’.

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[55] “Say! Are those who know and those who do not, equal?”

[56] “Eat and drink, and be not wasteful”

[57] “And when you look, you will see. .

[58] “And when he arrived at the wells of Madyan. . .”

At times the subject and the object are mentioned because the intent is to ascribe the verb to its subject and to attach it to the object. This is so in the verses: ‘ wa lā ta’kulū ‘l-riba”[59](3:130); “wa lā taqrabū ‘l-zinā”[60] (17:32) And in cases such as these, where the omitted words are not mentioned they will be said to be omitted. In cases where an indicator points to the elision, there is some surety that the omitted words must be accounted for. This is so in the following verses: a hādha alladhī ba`atha Allah rasūlan”[61]”(25:41), and “wa kullan wa`ada Allāh ‘l-ĥusna”[62](4:95) At times, however, the elision is doubtful, as in the verse: “qul! ‘Ud`ū Allāh au ‘ud`ū ‘l-raĥmān” [63](17:110) If the word *‘ud`ū* is translated to mean ‘call out to’ then the elision is not inferred; if however, it is translated to mean: “invoke the name of” then it will be inferred.

The Conditions for Elision

There are eight conditions for elision:

1-Actual Evidence, which may be contextual, as in the verse: “qālū salāman” [64](11:69) which means that we greet you with peace. Or verbal, as in the verse: “wa qīla li alladhīna ittaqau mādhā anzala rabbukum qālū khair” [65](16:30) that is, ‘he sent down good.’ Another example is the verse: “qāla salām qaum munkarūn”[66](51:25) which means, ‘Peace upon you, you are an unknown group.”

The intellect provides evidence where it is impossible to make rational sense of a statement except by implying an elision. At times it does provide evidence of elision but not about its specifics; the latter is provided by some other evidence. An example is the verse: “ĥurrimat `alaikum ‘l-maitat”[67](5:3) where logic dictates that carrion itself cannot be the forbidden object, because lawfulness does not apply to the end result, but lawfulness and unlawfulness apply to acts. Thus one ascertains through logic that an elision has occurred. Identifying this elision, which is not to eat, is by way of the law, and in this case, the statement of the Prophet (s) “It is its consumption that is forbidden.” [68] The latter is required by the intellect, because it cannot independently determine the lawful and the unlawful. As for the view of the author of the work *‘l-Talkhis*[69], that this too, is based on rational proof, it is based on an uncritical adoption of ‘l-Sakāki’s[70] view, which in itself is based on a Mu`tazilite principle.

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[59] “Do not consume *riba*. . .”

[60] “Do not get close to fornication. . .”

[61] “Is this (person) the one God chose to send as a messenger!"

[62] “And to every (believer) God has promised good.”

[63] “Say! Invoke God or invoke the Most Gracious. . .”

[64] “They said: Peace!”

[65] “And, when asked, “What has your Lord bestowed upon you?, those who are God conscious say: “Only good.”

[66] “He said: ‘Peace--a group unknown”

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[67] “Forbidden unto you is carrion. . .”

[68] ‘L-Bukhārī, *‘l-Saĥīĥ*, hadith #1292

[69] ‘l-Qazwini, Jalāl ‘l-Din b. Muhammad b. `Abd ‘l-Rahman, *‘l-Talkhis*

[70] ‘l-Sakāki, Yusuf b. `Ali, author of the work *Kitāb Miftāh ‘l-`Ulum*

Sometimes the intellect does point to the elision as in the verse: “Wa jā’a rabbuka”[71](89:22) It is His order, or more specifically, His punishment that will come, because the intellect shows that the coming of the Lord is impossible, This is so because ‘coming’ is an attribute of transience, and that this was the act of the comer. Other verses are: “aufū bi ‘l-`uqūd”[72](5:1) and “aufū bi `ahd Allah”[73] (16: 91) which mean pursuant to the contracts and to the pledge given to God. This is because contracts and pledges are statements that come into existence and then terminate, and their fulfilment and revocation therefore, are inconceivable. Fulfilment and revocation occur as a consequence to them and with regard to the consequence of their strictures.

Sometimes it is convention that singles out the object of elision, as in the verse “Fa dhālikunna alladhī lumtunnanī fīhi”[74] (12:32) The mind points to an elision because it is not plausible that Yusuf was the object of rebuke. Furthermore, the verse: “fa qad shagafahā ȟubban”[75](12:30) may allude to the words: “you have been blaming me because of my passion for him.” as being elided It may however, also allude to her efforts to seduce him, as in the verse: “turāwidu fatāha”[76](12:30) Convention seems to point to the latter because one is not generally rebuked for being passionately in love, but rather, for attempting to seduce; the prevention of the latter is within one’s capacity.

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[71]

[72] “fulfil the pledges. . .”

[73] “Fulfil the pledge to God. . .”

[74] This then, is the person about whom you have been blaming me.”

[75] “Passion has pierced her heart.”

[76] “She is trying to seduce her slave-boy”

At times the elision is explicated elsewhere, and this is the most compelling form thereof. An example is the verse: “Hal yandhurūn illā an ya’tiyahum Allāh”[77](2:210) which, as is clear from the verse:“Au ya’tiya amr rabbika”[78] (16:23), refers to His command. The verse “. [79]“Wa jannat `ard uhā ‘l-samāwāt” (3:133) actually means “like the vastness of the skies” as is clear from the verse in the chapter ‘*l-Bayyina*” And the verse: “rasūl min Allah”[80](98:2) actually means “*rasūl min `ind Allah*” as is clear from the verse: “wa lammā jā’ahum rasūl min `ind Allāh”[81](2:101)

Convention also provides proof of the existence of elision.. An example is the verse: “Lau na`lamu qitāl la ittaba’nākum”[82] (3:167) which may be interpreted as is without positing any elision. But the verse actually refers to ‘the place where the battle was to have taken place’, or a place appropriate for battle. This is implied from the fact that they they were indeed, quite knowledgeable about warfare, and would have been embarrassed to utter such ignorance of fighting. Thus, convention precludes the interpretation “If only we knew how to fight”, and this is also why the exegete, Mujāhid posited the words ‘the place of battle’. Their indication to the Prophet (s) that he not leave the confines of the city of Medina, also points to this fact.

Another way of determining the elision is to focus on the action that the statement implies; thus in the verse “In the name of Allah” if the action is one of recitation then the verb implied would be “I read” , and if it is one of eating, then it would be “I begin eating”. Whilst rhetoricians agree on this explanation the grammarians insist that it implies “I have begun” or “My beginning is” with the name of Allah. That the former view is more correct is borne out by an explicit statement in this regard in the verse: “wa qāla irkabū fīhā bism Allāh majraihā wa mursāhā”[83](11:41) More proof is the hadith which states: “In Your name my Lord, I lay down my side.”

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[77] “Do they wait for God to come. . .”

[78] “Or that the command of your Lord comes”

[79]

[80] “A messenger from God.”

[81] “And when unto them came a messenger from God.”

[82] “If only we knew battle, we would surely have obeyed you.”

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[83] ‘Embark ye, on the Ark! In the name of God let its sailing and its anchoring be!”

Another way of determining elisions is through grammatical conventions, as in the view regarding the verse "La uqsimu "[84](75:1)which is taken to imply "La ana uqsima " because the verb of a circumstantial phrase (hāl) is not used to swear an oath. Another example is the verse: "Ta Allāh taft'u"[85](12:85) implies "you will never cease" because if the apodosis was in the affirmative sense then the letters *lām* and *nūn* would have been added to the verb. This is so in the verse: "wa tallāh la 'akīdanna" [86](21:57)

In some cases the statement is self evident and in no need of implying an elision, but grammatical conventions demand that this be done, as in the case of the statement "La Ilaha illa Allah" Here the predicate "*maujūd*" or 'present' is omitted. The imām Fakhr 'l-Din rejected this view saying "One need not imply an elision for this verse, and the view of the grammarians is false because the negation of an objects existence in absolute terms is broader than its negation in specific terms. An objects absolute negation is proof of the negation of its quiddity as well as any qualifications it might have. But if some quality which has been specifically qualified is negated then that in itself would not require the negation of other qualities. The rebuttal however, is that the word 'present' (*maujūd*) necessitates the absolute negation of all other dieties but Allah. There is no question about their non existence, because the word itself is a negation of quiddity in absolute terms without qualifications. In any event, the word must be posited as a predicate because it is impossible to have a subject without a substantive or an implied predicate. Even when the meaning is clear the grammarian will assume a predicate if only to conform to the rule.

Note

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[84] "I swear. . ."

[85] "By Allah! You will cease. . ."

[86] "By Allah! I will certainly conspire to . . ."

Ibn Hishām has said: “Proof is required in cases where the elision is an entire sentence or one of its two parts, or where it provides a meaning that the statement itself is based on. An example is the verse: “Ta Allāh taft’u”(12:85) As for the ancillaries of a sentence, that their elision has occurred need not be proved through evidence. The only requirement is that such an elision not cause a violation in the sense, or the structure of a sentence. He also said that where the proof is a word, it should conform to the elision. He thus rejected Farrā’s assertion that in the verse: “ ‘a yaĥsab ‘l-insān an lan najma`a `izāmahū; balā qādirīn”[87](75:4) the inference is “Yea indeed! He will know (*la yahsabanna qādirīn*) that we have the power.” The word *yahsabu* mentioned in the verse means, to think, while the word qādirina refers to actual knowledge thereof. Because scepticism about the resurrection of dead bones is heresy it is hardly likely that man would be ordered to do so. He went on to say: “The correct view is that of Sibawayh that the word qādirin is a circumstantial phrase (hāl) and the implication is “We will reassemble them, with ability”, because the plural form of the verb is closer to the elision than the verbal form of the word *hisbān*, and also because the word *bala* is used to change a negative into the affirmative case, and in this case it happens to be the verb in the plural form.”

2-The elision should not be equivalent to a part. Thus, the active participle, the passive subject, the subject of the kāna construction and its sisters may not be elided. Ibn Hishām said: “As for Ibn `Aţiyya’s assertion with regard to the verse: “bi’sa mathal ‘l-qaum. . .”[88](62:5) implying: “*biʾsa mathal mathal ʿl-qaum*”: if by this is meant an analysis of the inflections and that the active participle is the omitted word *ʿl-mathl* then that ought to be rejected. If however, he meant thereby an explanation of the meaning, and that the pronoun representing the word *ʿl-mathl* is concealed in the *biʾsa* then that is acceptable.

3-The elision should not have been for emphasis, for an elision negates emphasis. This is because any elision is based on brevity, as opposed to emphasis which is based on prolixity. It is for this reason that ‘l-Fārisi rebuts ‘l-Zajjāj’s assertion that the verse: “in hādhān la sāĥirān”[89]

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[87] “Does man think we are unable to reassemble his bones; Yea indeed! We do have the power. . .”

[88] “Calamitous is the parable of a people. . .”

[89] “These two are but magicians. . .”

(20:63) implies “These two are but sorcerers for them (*in hādhāni lahuma sāhirāni*). He maintained that “The letter lām cannot be used to omit as well as to emphasize. But nothing prevents an elision based on some proof and its subsequent emphasis. This is because an elision supported by evidence is equivalent to being present.

4-The elision should not cause the abridgement of an abridgement; thus the verbal noun should not be omitted because it is in turn an abridgement of the verb.

5-The elision should not be the weak regent (*`āmil da`īf*); thus prepositions, and words governing the subjunctive and the apocopate forms should not be omitted except in cases where, because of their frequent use, the proof of their elision is strong.

6-The elision should itself not be a substitute for another word. Thus, because the Arabs allow the elision of the interjection (*harf ‘l-nidā’*) Ibn Mālik asserted that it was not a substitute for the word ‘*ad`ū’*. This is also why the letter *ta’* in words such as *iqāmat* and *istiqāmat* is not omitted. And one should not draw an analogy from the elision in the verse ‘wa iqāma ‘l-Salāt” (21:73) The same is true for the predicate of a *kāna* sentence because it acts as a substitute for its infinitive.

7-The elision should not necessitate a strong form of the regent; thus no analogy is drawn from the verse: “wa kullan wa`ada Allāh ‘l-ĥusnā”[90](57:10)

Note

Where possible, Akhfash has taken gradation into consideration; and this is why he has said with regard to the verse: “wa ittaqū yauman lā tajzī nafs `an nafs shai’an”[91](2:48) that originally it read ‘*lā tajzī fīhi*’. The preposition was first omitted and it became ‘*lā tajzīhi*’ and later, the pronoun was omitted and it ended up, ‘*tajzī’*. There is a distinct subtlelty about such a construction, but Sībawayh considers both words elided at the same time. Ibn Jinnī said that Akhfash’s view is more suited to human nature than the elision of two words simultaneously.

Rule

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[90] “And unto each We have promised some good.”

[91] “And be conscious of the Day when one human being shall not in the least be able to avail himself of another”

In order to avoid contradicting a well established convention and putting words in places other than where they belong, a word should only be implied omitted in places where it generally appears. Thus in the statement ‘*Zaidan ra’aituhu’* the exegete will have to posit an elision at the beginning. The rhetoricians, together with the grammarians, have however permitted an elision at the end of such a statement as well, to show specificity, or, as in the case of the following verse, where a rule prevents it: “wa ammā thamūd fa hadaināhum”[92] (41:17) Here, the word ‘*ammā*’ is not followed by a verb.

Rule

It is also required that in order to avoid contradictions with general rules that positing (*taqdīr*) be kept to a minimum. It is for this reason that Fārsi’s contention is considered weak, with regard to the verse: “wa allā’ī lam yaĥidna” [93](65:4) where the words “three months would be their waiting period’ are supposedly implied. To posit the elision of the word “*kadhālika*” is preferable. The shaikh `Izz ‘l-Dīn said: “Only words most clear, and closest to the objective should be regarded as omitted; this, because the Arabs will not posit a word except if the presence of such a word would ordinarily be better and more appropriate for that statement. An example is the verse: “ja`ala Allāh ‘l-ka`bata ‘l-bait ‘l-ĥarām qiyāman li ‘l-nās” [94](5:97) Whilst Abu `Ali has posited the elision to be ‘the structure of the House’(*nusb ‘l-Ka`ba*) others have posited ‘sanctity of the House’ (*ĥurmat ‘l-Ka`ba*)This is more appropriate because sanctity is also applied to the sacrificial animal, the necklace (put around the neck of the animal of sacrifice), and the sacred months. This is undoubtedly more eloquent than the word *nusb* which seems far removed from this sense. He also said: “Whenever an elision wavers between good and better, one must choose the latter, for God Almighty in describing His Book, spoke of it as being the “best of speech’; its elisions therefore must be of the best, just as its pronouncements are of the best.

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[92] “As for the Thamud, We guided them.”

[93] “As for those not menstruating. . .”

[94]“Allah hath decreed that the Ka`aba, the inviolable House, shall remain a symbol for all people.

When an elision may either be synoptical or discursive then positing the latter is more appropriate, as is the case with the verse: “wa Dāwūd wa Sulaimān idh yaĥkumān fi ‘l-ĥarth”[95](21:78) One may either posit ‘in the matter of the pasture’ or ‘they were made to account for the pasture as missing’; the latter is more appropriate because it makes specific, while the former is synoptic and vacillating among several options.

Rule

If, in singling out the elision the choice is between considering it a verb that is omitted and its subject which is included, or between a subject that is omitted and its predicate which is included, then the latter is preferable. This is because the subject in being the target of the predicate makes the elision the target of the inclusion and creates the impression that no elision has taken place. The verb however is quite unlike the subject, except if it is substantiated by some other narrative in the same place or elsewhere. An example of the former is the passive form of the verb in the verse: “ His praises (yusabbahu) are sung therein. . .”(24:36) for it implies that ‘men sing His praises’. Another is the verse: “Thus, was it revealed unto you (yuhā) and unto those before you. .” (42:3) which implies “God reveals to you”. They will not however, be considered subjects with elided predicates because in the view of those who consider the verb as representing the subject, the effectiveness of the subjects is established. An example of the second case is the verse: “wa la’in sa’altahum man khalaqahum la yaqūlunna ALlāh” [96](6:80). In this case it is preferable to posit “*khalaqahum Allah*” than “*Allah khalaqahum*” because the verse that follows is “khalaqa hunna ‘l-`Azīz ‘l-`Alīm” [97](43:9)

Rule

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[95] “Recall, when David and Solomon passed judgement on the pasture incident. . .”

[96] “If you were to ask them who created them they would say “God!”

[97] “The Almighty, the Omnipotent created them”

If the choice is between the first and the second parts being omitted choosing the second is preferable. It thus follows that in the statement “`a tuhāājjūnni” [98](6:80) it must be assumed that the second *nūn* indicating the accusative is omitted rather than the first *nūn* of the nominative case. In the verse “nār talazzā” [99](92:14)it is the second *tā’* and not the first which is the *tā`* of the present tense which is elided. And in the verse “wa Allāh wa rasūluhū aĥaqqu an yurdauhu”[100] (9:62) the elision happens to be the predicate of the second statement and not the first. And in a verse such as: “‘l-hajj ashhur” [101](2:197) the elision is the mudāf of the second noun. Thus it would be *hajj ashhur* and not *ashhur ‘l-hajj*. In some cases it is required that it be the first, as in the following verse if the word *malā’ikatuhū* is recited in the nominative case: “Inna Allāh wa malā’ikatahū yusallūn `ala ‘l-nabiyy” [102](33:56) This is because this predicate (is in the plural form and is thus) specific to the second subject which is in the plural form. In other cases such as the verse: “anna Allāh barī’ min ‘l-mushrikīn wa rasūluhū”[103](9:3) the elision must be posited with the second noun because the predicate appears before it. Thus, reconstructed, it would read: *wa rasūluhū barī’ aidan*

Forms of Elision

There are several forms of elision:

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[98] “Do you dispute with me!”

[99] “Blazing flames.”

[100] “God and His Messenger have more right to be obeyed.”

[101] “Hajj is to be performed in the months. . .”

[102] “Verily God and His Angels send salutations to the Prophet”

[103] “And that God and His Messenger are totally absolved of the pagans.

1-The first form, known as *'l-Iqtitā`*, entails the elision of some letters of a word. Ibn 'l-'Athīr rejects the occurrence of this genre in the Qur'ān, but his view is rebutted by the fact that some scholars include therein the opening letters of the chapters. This, as mentioned previously, is based on the theory that each of these letters represents the names of God. Some have argued that the preposition bā that appears in the verse: "wa imsaĥū bi ru'ūsikum"[104](5:6) is the first letter of the word *ba`d* whose remaining letters were omitted. Another example is the verse "wa nādau: "yā mali"[105] (43:77) where, according to some recitations, the final consonant of the word *mālik* is elided (*tarkhīm*). On hearing this some of the pious ancestors commented: "Of what use could elision be to the denizens of Hell!" Some scholars responded that because of the severity of their condition, they were unable to complete the statement.

Also belonging to this category is the elision of the letter *hamza* of the word *ana* in the verse: "wa lakinnā huwa Allāh" rabbī"[106](18:38) Reconfigured, the word would read: *lākin ana*, but the *hamza* of '*ana* was omitted and the letter *nūn* was assimilated (*idghām)* into the previous *nūn*. Other examples are: "wa yumsiku 'l-samā' an taqa`a `allarda[107] (22:65); "bi mā 'unzillīka[108] (2:4); "fa man ta`ajjala fī yaumain falathma `alaihi"[109] (2:203); and "innahā lĥada 'l-kubar"[110] (74:35).

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[104] "...wipe part of your head."

[105] "And they will call out: 'Oh angel. . . !"

[106] "But as for myself, [I know that] He is God, my sustainer..."

[107] "...and [that it is He who] holds the celestial bodies from collapsing on the earth (`*allardi* instead of `*ala 'l-'ardi*)..."

[108] "...which has been bestowed from on high upon thee (unzlīka instead of unzila ilaika),..."

[109] "...but he who hurries away within two days shall incur no sin (falathma instead of falā ithma)..."

[110] "Verily, that [hell-fire] is indeed one (lahda instead of la ihda) of the great [forewarnings]"

2-The second form, known as *'l-iktifā'* occurs where for some special reason one of two words that are bonded together is omitted in a context that would otherwise require the mention of both words. In most cases this applies to words linked by a conjunction, as in the verse; "sarabil taqikum 'l-harr"[111] (16:81) which, reconfigured, would include *wa 'l-bard* (and the cold), except that the addressees in this case are the Arabs whose lands are hot and for whom protection from the heat, given its severity, is more important than from the cold. This elision is also said to be due to the fact that the bounty of protection from the cold was made explicit in the verse: "wa min aswāfihā wa aubārihā wa ash`ārihā"[112] (16:80) Other examples are the verse: "wa ja`ala lakum min 'l-jibāl aknānan"[113] (16:81), and the verse: "wa 'l-an`ām khalaqahā lakum fīhā dif'un"[114] (16:5) . Other examples of this genre are the verse:"bi yadika 'l-khair"[115] (3:26) which reconfigured, would read *wa 'l-sharr* (and evil). Good is singled out for special mention because it is the objective of worship, or because it is more plentiful, or because it is irreverent to attribute evil to God. This is echoed in the statement of the Prophet (s) "and evil is not ascribed to You!"[116]

Also in this category is the verse: "wa lahū mā sakana fi 'l-lail wa 'l-nahār"[117] (6:13) While this ought to include the word 'moves' *wa mā taĥarraka* (and what moves), the word *sakana* (rests) has been singled out for mention because it is the predominant condition shared between animals and humans. In addition, everything that moves ultimately aspires towards rest. Another example is the verse: "alladhīna yu'minūna bi 'l-ghaib" [118](2:3)

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[111] "...garments to protect you from heat..."

[112] "...and [to make] furnishings and goods for temporary use of their [rough] wool and their soft, furry wool..."

[113] " and from the mountains He fashioned for you"

[114] "And He creates cattle: you derive warmth from them, and [various other] uses

[115] "...In Thy hand is all good..."

[116] Muslim, *'l-Saĥīĥ* #771.

[117] ". . .to Him belongs all that rests in the night and the day,"

[118] "who believe in [the existence of] the unseen"

This reconfigured, would read: *wa 'l-shahādat* (and the seen) because belief in both is essential, but the former has been singled out for mention because it is more praiseworthy, and because the unseen needs to be believed in, but that is not the case with the seen. Another example is the verse: "wa rabb 'l-mashāriq" [119](37:5) and "its setting". Also, in the verse: "hudan li 'l-muttaqīn"[120](2:2) the word 'disbelieving' is omitted. This is the view of 'l-Anbārī, and it is supported by the verse: "hudan li 'l-nās"[121](2:185). Another elision is in the verse: "in imru'un halaka laisa lahū walad"[122] (4:176) where 'father' is included, because it goes on to grant the sister one half, and this occurs only in the absence of the father, who would otherwise deprive her.

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[119] "And the Lord of the sun's rising."

[120] "...a guidance for the god-conscious"

[121] "...as a guidance unto mankind..."

[122] "...If a man dies, childless. . ."

3- This category, known as *‘l-Iĥtikāk*, is the most creative and elegant of this genre. But the rhetoricians rarely if ever, bring attention to it, and I did not see it in the commentary of the *The Eloquence of the Blind One* by his companion, the Andalusian[123]. ‘l-Zarkashī did make mention this in the work *‘l-Burhān*, but not with this title; rather, he called it the symmetrical elision (*‘l-Hadhf ‘l-Muqābilī*). Of the contemporary scholars it is Burhān ‘l-Dīn ‘l-Biqā`ī who dedicated a separate work to this topic. In his commentary to the work *‘l-Badī`īyya* ‘l-Andalūsi had this to say: “*‘l-Ihtikāk* is one powerful form of the metaphor, and it entails the elision of a word in the first part of a statement whose opposite appears in the second part, and vice versa.. An example of this is the verse: “wa mathal ‘lladhīna kafarū ka mathal ‘lladhī yan`iqu”[124] (2:171) The verse reconfigured, reads: “the parable of the prophets and the disbelievers is that of one who cries out in warning and one who hears the cry as no more than a sound and a call.” In the first instance the word ‘prophets’ is omitted because the words “*alladhī yan`iqu*” alludes to it, and in the second instance the words “alladhī yun`aqu bihī” is omitted because “*alladhīna kafaru*” alludes to it.”

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[123] He is Muhammad b. Ahmad b. `Alī (d.780 h.) also known as Ibn Jābir ‘l-Andalusī, the author of the work, *‘l-Badī`īyya*. His companion is said to be Yūsuf ‘l-Ra`īnī ‘l-Andalūsī.

[124] “And so, the parable of those who are bent on denying the truth is that of the beast which hears the shepherd’s cry, and hears in it nothing but a sound and call. . .”

Another example is the verse: “wa adkhil yadaka fī jaibika takhruju baidā’”[125](27:12) which, when reconfigured implies firstly, that the hand, when placed in the bosom, was not white, and secondly, that it was removed from the bosom. Thus, from the first part the words “*ghair baydā*” has been omitted and from the second, the words “*wa akhrajahā*”. ‘l-Zarkash however, defined *‘l-iĥtibāk* as opposite phrases coming together in a single statement, such that the parallel object of each phrase is elided, because a word in the opposite phrase alludes to the elided word. An example is the verse: “amm yaqūlūna iftarāhu qul in iftaraituhū fa`alayya ijrāmī wa ana barī’un min mā tujrimūn”[126] (11:35) Reconfigured, the verse would read: “*in iftaraituhū fa `alayya ijrāmī wa antum bura’ā’u minhu; wa `alaikum ijrāmukum ana barī’un min mā tujrimūn”* or “. . .If I fabricated this then mine is the sin, and you are absolved thereof. But you alone bear the burden of your sins, whilst I stand exonerated of your sins.”

Another example is the verse: “wa yu`adhdhib ‘l-munāfiqīna in shā’a au yatūba `alaihim”[127] (33:24) which, when reconfigured, would read: “*wa yu`adhdhib ‘l-munāfiqīna in shā’a fa lā yatūbu `alaihim; au yatūba `alaihim fa lā yu`adhdhibhum*” or: “ . . .And punish the hypocrites -if that be His will-and not forgive them, or forgive them and not punish them.” And the verse “wa lā taqrbūhunna hattā yathurna fa idhā tatahharna fa’tūhunna”[128](2:222) implies: “until they are cleansed of menstrual blood and cleanse themselves with water. And you may only draw close to them after they are so cleansed and have cleansed themselves.” And the verse: “khalaţū `amalan sālihan wa ākharu sayyi’an” [129] (9:102) implies “doing righteous deeds along with evil deeds, and other evil deeds along with righteous ones.” Another elegant example is the statement of the Almighty: “fi’at tuqātilu fī sabīl Allāh wa ukhrā kāfiran” [130](3:13) which alludes to one host of believers fighting in the path of God and the other, a host of disbelievers fighting in the path of false gods. Kirmānī's work *ʾl-Gharāʾib*, states that the first verse (2:171) implies: 'The parable of those who disbelieve, O Muhammad!, is that of a crier among sheep'. From each part of the analogy an elision is made of that which is alluded to in the second part. The Qur'ān has many examples of this, and it is the most eloquent form of speech."

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[125] “Now place thy hand into thy bosom: it will come forth [shining] white, without blemish!”

[126] “Do some perhaps claim, “[Muhammad] fabricated this [story]”? Say: “If I fabricated this then upon me be this sin; but far be it from me to commit the sin of which you are guilty.”

[127] “...and cause the hypocrites to suffer-if that be His will- or [if they repent] accept their repentance:”

[128] “...and do not draw near unto them until they are cleansed. And after they are cleansed you may draw near to them.”

[129] “...after doing righteous deeds side by side with evil ones. . .”

[130] “...one host fighting in God’s cause and the other denying Him,”

This name is derived from the word *ʾl-habk* which means firmness, precision, and the refinement of the handiwork on a garment. Thus, when the phrase *habk ʾl-thaub* is used it refers to the closing of the gaps between the stitches, and its refinement in a way that prevents gaps and yet reflects beauty. The similarity to the verse in question is that the elisions in the verse are compared to the gaps in the sewing. The person who appreciates such eloquence then utilizes his creativity to arrange and mend it. He then puts the elided words in such gaps, fills them and prevents voids that occur to him, and thus completes the meaning of the verse, and also adds refinement to it.

4- This form, known as *ʾl-Ikhtizāl* is like no other, in that the elision may be a noun, a verb, a particle, or more.

The Elision of the Noun

a-The elision of the *mudāf*: This form appears extensively throughout the Qur'ān, so much so that Ibn 'l-Jinni had this to say: "The Qurān contains a thousand examples of this form." In his work *ʾl-Majāz* the shaikh, `Izz 'l-Dīn has compiled such elisions sequentially by chapter and verse. The following verses are examples of this genre. The verse: " 'l-hajj ashhur. . ."[131](2:197) which when reconfigured would either read *hajj ashhurin* or *ashhur ʾl-hajj.* The verse: "wa lākinna 'l-birr man āmana" [132] (2:177) which, when reconfigured could read *dha ʾl-birr* or *birr man.* The verse: "hurrimat `alaikum ummahātukum"[133] (4:23) when reconfigured would read: *nikāh ummahātikum*. The verse: "la adhaqnāka di`f 'l-hayāt wa di'f 'l-mamāt"[134] (17:75) when reconfigured would read: *di`fa `adhāb*. The verse“wa fī ‘l-riqāb” [135] (2:177) when reconfigured, would read: *fā tahrīr ‘l-riqāb.”*

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[131] "The pilgrimage shall take place in the months..."

[132] "...but truly pious is he who believes..."

[133] "Forbidden to you are your mothers..."

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[134] “...We would indeed have made thee taste life twice and death twice...”

[135] “...and is the freeing of necks from bondage...”

b-The elision of the *mudāf ilaihi*: This appears frequently in the case of the letter yā’ of the first person, as in: “rabb (ī) ighfirlī” [136] (7:151). It also occurs in cases indicating objectives as in the verse: “Li Allāh ‘l-amr min qablu wa min ba`d”[137] (30:4), that is, before and after victory. The same is true in cases where the prepositions *kull, ayy,* and *ba`d* are used, though there are occasions other than these where they also appear. This is so in the case of the verse: “fa lā khaufun `alaihim”[138] (2:38) which when recited without the nunation is reconfigured to read: ‘*fa lā khaufu shay’in `alaihim”*.

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[136] “O my Sustainer! Forgive me! ”

[137] “...[for] with God rests all power of decision, first and last...”

[138] “...need have no fear ...”

c-The elision of the subject: This appears frequently in response to a question as in the verse: “wa mā adrāka mā hiya! Nār!. . .” [139] (101:10,11), which when reconfigured reads: *hiya nār.* It also occurs after the letter *fā* of a conditional response, as in the verse: “man `amila sālihan fa linafsihī”[140] (45:15) which when reconfigured reads: ‘his actions are for his personal benefit’ *(fa `amaluhū li nafsihī”).* And the verse: “wa man ‘asā’a fa `alaihā” [141] (45:15) when reconfigured reads: ‘his evil will be borne by [his soul]’ (*fa isā’atuhū `alaihā)*. It also occurs after the word *qaul* as in: “wa qālū asātīr ‘l-awwalīn” [142] (25:5); and: “qālū adghāthu ahlām”[143] (12:44). This is also the case in instances where the predicate that follows gives the meaning of an adjective. An example is the verse: “‘l-tā’ibūn ‘l-`ābidūn”[144] (9:112), and the verse: “summun bukmun `umyun. . .” [145] (2:18). This has also occurred in other circumstances, as in the verse: “lā yaghurrannaka taqallubu alladhīna kafarū fī ‘l-bilād; matā`un qalīl” [146](3:196,197); and the verse: “lam yalbathū illā sā`atan min nahār; balāgh” [147](46:35); and the verse: ‘sūratun anzalnāhā”[148] (24:1), that is, ‘this is a chapter’. The elision is compulsory in cases where the adjective in the nominative case is cut off from the subject. Or when the predicate is omitted as in: “‘ukuluhā dā’im wa źilluhā”[149] (13:35), that is, everlasting (*dā’im*). It also occurs in cases where the elision may apply to the subject or the predicate, as in the verse: “fa sabr jamīl”[150] (12:18) which when reconfigured may either mean ‘is most beautiful” (*aijmal*), or ‘my lot is patience’ (*fa amrī sabr*). Another example is the verse: “fa tahrīr raqabat”[151] (4:92) which when reconfigured would include (the omitted predicate) ‘on him’ (`*alaihi*), or (the omitted subject) ‘a duty upon him” (*fa ‘l-wājib*).

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[139] “And what could make thee conceive what that [abyss] will be? A Fire...”

[140] “whoever does what is just and right, [does so] for his own good...”

[141] whoever does evil, [his evil deeds] will be borne by him.”

[142] “And they say, fables of ancient times...”

[143] ‘They answered : [This is one of] the most involved and confusing of dreams...”

[144] “[It is a triumph of] those who turn [unto God] in repentance, and worship and praise [Him]...”

[145] “[they are] deaf, [they are] dumb, [they are] blind...”

[146] “Let it not deceive you that those bent on denying the truth seem able to do as they please on earth: this is but a brief moment...”

[147] “...they had dwelt [on earth] no longer than an [earthly] hour; [this is Our] message.”

[148] “A chapter which We have bestowed from on high...”

[149] “...its fruits will be everlasting, and [so too] its shade.”

d-The elision of the noun of the adjective, as in: “wa `indahum qāsirāt ‘l-ţarf”[152] (37:48) that is ‘virgins’ (*hūr*) with modest gaze. Also: “an i’mal sābighāt”[153] when reconfigured reads: ‘long coats of mail (*durū’un sābighāt*). And the verse: “ayyuha ‘l-mu’minūn”[154] (24:31)which refers to a ‘community of believers’ (*‘l-qaum ‘l-mu’minūn*).

e-The elision of the adjective, as in: “ya’khudhu kulla safīnat”[155](18:79), that is, every sound boat (*sālihatin*). Proof that this is the case comes from the fact that it has also been recited in this manner, and the fact that the words: “an ta`ībahā”[156] does not disqualify it being a boat. Another example is the verse: ‘al’ān ji’ta bi ‘l-haqq”[157](2:71), which must refer to the manifest truth, or they would have denied its implications. Finally in the verse: “fa lā nuqīmu lahum yaum ‘l-qiyāmat waznan”[158] (18:105) the elision is positive value (*nāfi’an)*.

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[150] “...But [as for myself,] patience in adversity is most goodly. . .”

[151] “...there is a duty of freeing a slave...”

[152] “And with them will be mates of modest gaze...”

[153] “. . .to manufacture long (coats of mail).”

[154] “O you Believers...”

[155] “...seize every boat...”

[156] “. . .in order to damage it. . .”

[157] “...At last thou hast brought out the truth!...”

[158] “...We shall not assign to them any value on Resurrection Day.”

f-The elision of one part of a conjunctive phrase, as in: “an idrib bi `asāka ‘l-hajr; fa infalaq”[159] (26:63) where the missing words are: ‘so he did strike, and it split asunder!’ The conjunction ‘*waw*’ appears alongside the causative ‘*lam*’ either because the cause is omitted, as in the verse: “wa liyubliya ‘l-mu’minīna minhu balā’an hasanan”[160](8:17) Reconfigured, this would read: “out of kindness to the believers.”. Or because it is a conjunction for some other hidden cause which has been included in order to validate the conjunction. The verse in question would then read: “fa`ala dhālika li yudhīqa ‘L-kāfirīn ba’sahū wa liyubliya. . .” or “He did so in order to test the disbelievers with His wrath. . .”

g-The elision of both the subject and object of the conjunction, as is the case in the verse: “lā yastawī minkum man anfaqa min qabl ‘l-fath wa qātala[161] (57:10). When reconfigured this verse would include ‘and those who spent thereafter’ *(wa man anfaqa ba`dahu*). Another example is the verse:”bi yadika ‘l-khair” [162](3:26) which when reconfigured would read: ‘and all evil’ (*wa ‘l-sharr)*

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h-The elision of the second noun of an appositional substantive, as in the verse: “wa lā taqūlū limā tasifu alsinatukum ‘l-kadhib.”[163](16:116) Here the pronoun ‘*hu*’ attached to the verb ‘*tasifu*’ is omitted with the word ‘*alkadhib*’ acting as its apposition.

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[159] “...Strike the sea with thy staff! It then splits asunder...”

[160] “...and [He did all this] in order that He might test the believers by a goodly test...”

[161] “...Not equal are those who spent and fought [in God’s cause] before the Victory ...”

[162] “...In Thy hand is all good...”

[163] “Hence, do not utter falsehoods by letting your tongues determine. .

h-The elision of the active participle is not permissible except if it is the active participle of a verbal noun. This is so for example, in the verse, "lā yas'am 'l-insān min du`ā'i 'l-khair"[164] (41:49) that is, 'of his asking' *(min du`ā'ihī)*. Kasā'i however allows this without qualification, citing as evidence the verse, "idhā balaghat 'l-tarāqiya"[165] (75:26) where the elision is 'his soul' (*'l-rūh)*. Another example is the verse, "hattā tawārat bi 'l-hijāb" [166] (38:32), that is, 'the sun' (*'l-shams)*.

i-The elision of the object: as mentioned previously, this occurs often with objects that signify intention. But it does appear elsewhere as well, as is evident from the verse: "inna alladhīna ittakhadhū 'l-`ijl" [167] (7:152) where the elision is: 'as a god' (*ilāhan*). And in the verse: "kallā saufa ta'lamūn"[168] (102:3) it is 'the consecquences of your actions' (*`āqibatu 'amrikum*).

j-The elision of the circumstantial phrase appears frequently in the form of a statement. An example is the verse: "wa 'l-malā'ikatu yadkhulūna 'alaihim min kulli bāb; salām"[169] (13:23,24) that is, "they will be saying" (*qā'ilīn)*.

k-The elision of the noun in the vocative form, as in: "allā yasjudū"[170](27:25) that is, O! These people! Also: "Yā laita![171](28:79) that is, O! People!

The antecedents are elided in four circumstances:

l-As a relative pronoun, as in: "a hādha alladhī ba`atha Allāhu rasūl" (25:41), that is, 'God has sent him'(*ba`athahū*).

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[164] "Man never tires of asking for the good [things of life]..."

[165] "...when comes up to the throat [of a dying man]..."

[166] "...until hidden by the veil . . ."

[167] "Verily, as for those who have taken to worshipping the calf. . ."

[168] "Nay, in time you will come to understand!"

[169] "...and the angels will come unto them from every gate. . . peace..."

[170] " that they ought not to prostrate. . ."

[171] "...Oh, if we but had..."

j-As an adjective, as in: “wa ittaqū yauman lā tajzī nafsun `an nafs”[172](2:48), that is, ‘on that day’(*fīhi*).

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[172] “and remain conscious of [the coming of] a Day when no human being shall in the least avail another...”

k-As a predicate, as in: “wa kullan wa`ada Allāhu ‘l-husna”[173] (4:95), that is, ‘God has promised him’ (*wa’adahū*).

The Elision of the Hāl

The *Hāl* or condition is omitted as follows:

- the elision of the subject of the word *ni`ma* as in the verse “Innā wajadnāhu sābiran ni`ma ‘l-`abdu”[174](38:44) where the name Job is elided. In the verse: “Fa qaddarnā; fa ni`ma ‘l-qādirūn”[175] (77:23), where the word ‘us’ is elided. And in the verse: wa la ni`ma dār ‘l-muttaqīn”[176] (16:30) the word ‘heaven’ is elided.
- the elision of the conjunctive noun: In the verse: “āmanna bi alladhī ‘unzila ilainā wa ‘unzila ilaikum”[177](2:126) the words ‘and that which was sent down to you’ is elided, because that which was sent down to us is not the same as that which was sent down to those before us. It is for this reason that the word *mā* is repeated in the verse: “āmannā bi Allāhi wa mā ‘unzila ilainā wa mā ‘unzila ilā Ibrāhīm”[178] (2:126)

The Elision of the Verb

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[173] “. . .Unto each has God promised the ultimate good...”

[174] “...for, verily, We found him full of patience in adversity; how wonderful a servant. . .”

[175] “Thus we determined [the nature of man’s creation]: and excellent indeed are those who determine!”

[176] .“. . .How excellent indeed will be the abode of the God-conscious ”

[177] “We bring faith in that which was sent down to us and to you”

[178] “We bring faith in God and that which was sent down to us and that (*ma*) which was sent down to Abraham.”

Several examples of the omitted verb exist in cases where it plays an explanatory role. These include the following verses: “wa in aĥad min ‘l-mushrikīn istajāraka. . .”[179](9:6); “idha ‘l-samā’u inshaqqat”[180](84:1); and “qul lau antum tamlikūna” [181] (17:100). The verb is also often omitted when it serves as the main clause of an interrogatory statement. One example is the verse: “wa qīla li alladhīna ittaqau madha anzala rabbukum qālū khairan”.[182] (16:30) where the word *‘anzala* is elided. More common however, is the elision of the verb *qāla*, as in the verse: “wa qīla li alladhīna āmanū mādhā anzala rabbukum; qālū khairan” [183](2:127), where the words *yaqūlān rabbanā* is elided. Abū Ya`lā has said: “The omission of the word *qāla* from human speech is rare, but there’s nothing wrong with it.”

It does however, occur in other circumstances as well, as is clear from the following examples: In the verse: “intahau khairan lakum”[184] (4:171) the words *wa i‘tau* is elided. In “walladhīna tabawwa’a ‘l-dār wa ‘l-īmān”[185] (59:9) the words: *wa alfū ‘l-īmān* ‘they found faith’ or *i`taqdū* ‘they believed’ are elided. In “‘uskun anta wa zaujuka ‘l-jannat”[186](2:35) the words: *wa ‘li yaskun zaujuka* ‘let your wife live as well’ is elided. In “wa imra’atuhū hammālat ‘l-hatab”[187] (107:3) the word: *adhamm* ‘even more blame worthy’ is elided. In “wa ‘l-muqīmīn ‘l-salāt”[188] (4:162) the word *amdaĥu* ‘I commend’ is elided. And in “wa lākin rasūl Allāh”[189] (33:40) the wrd *kāna* “he had been” is omitted. Another verse is: “wa inna kullan lammā . . .”[190] (11:111) the word *yūfū a`mālahum* (requite their deeds) is omitted.

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[179] “And if any of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God seeks thy protection, grant him protection. . .”

[180] “When the sky is split asunder. . .”

[181] “Say: If you were to own all the treasure-houses. . .”

[182] “But [when] those who are conscious of God are asked, “What is it that your Sustainer has bestowed from on high ?” they answer: ‘goodness’. . .”

[183] “And when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the foundations of the Temple, “O our Sustainer!...”

[184] “...Desist [from this assertion] for your own good...”

[185] “And [it will be for the poor from among] those who, before them, had their abode in this world, and in faith...”

[186] “...dwell thou and thy wife in this garden...”

[187] “As for his wife, the carrier of firewood. . .”

The Elision of the Particle

In the work *‘l-Muhtasib* Ibn Jinni had this to say: “Abu `Alī informed us that Abū Bakr said: ‘The elision of the particle is not based on analogical deduction, because particles themselves are used to abridge speech. Thus omitting the particle is tantamount to summarizing a summary and thus obliterating it. The following are examples:

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[188] “...and those who are [especially] constant in prayer...”

[189] “...but he is God’s Apostle...”

[190] “And, verily, unto each and all will thy Sustainer give their full due for whatever [good or evil] they may have done...”

1-The elision of the interrogative *hamza* in the verse: “sawā’un `alaihim andhartahum. . .”[191] (2:6). Another example is the verse “hādha rabbi”[192](6:76) in all three its occurrences. Another, is the elision of the particle *a wa* in the verse ‘wa tilka ni`mat tamunnuhā. . .”[193] (26:22)

2-The elision of the noun represented by a particle in an adjectival phrase: Ibn ‘l-Mālik said: ‘This is not permissible except in the case of the particle *an* in the verse: “Wa min āyātihī (an) yurīkum ‘l-barq. . .”[194](30:24)

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[191] “It matters not whether you warn them.”

[192] “This is my Lord!”

[193] “And this is that past favor whereby you reproach me.”

[194] “And of His signs is His showing you the lightning.”

3- The elision of the preposition is common where the words *an* and *anna* appear, as in: “yamunnūna `alaika (li) an aslamū, qul lā tamunnū `alayya islāmakum; bal Allahu yamunnu `alaikum an hadākum”[195](49:17) Another example is: “atma`u (li) an yaghfira li. . .”[196](26:82); and also: “a ya`idukum (bi) annakum”[197](23:35). The elision also occurs with other words as in “qaddarnā (la)hu manāzila [198](114:39); wa yabghūna (la)hā `iwaja”[199] (7:45); “yukhawwifu (kum) (bi) auliyā’ahū”[200](7:17); “wa ikhtāra Moosa (min) qaumahū”[201](7:155); and “wa lā ta`zimū (`alā) `uqdatun ‘l-nikāh”[202] (2:235)

6-The elision of the conjunction: ‘l-Fārisī provides the following examples: “wa lā `alā alladhīna idhā mā atauka li taĥmilahum; (wa) qulta lā ajidu mā aĥmilukum `alaihi tawallau”[203] (9:94) Another verse is: “(wa) wajūh yauma’idhin nā`imat” [204](88:8) because it is conjoined to: “wujūh yauma’idh khāshi`at”[205] (88:2)

7-The elision of the particle *fa* that expresses the effects of an antecedent.‘l-Akhfash provides this example: “In taraka khair ‘l-wasiyyatu li ‘l-wālidain”[206](2:180)

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[195] “They make their surrender a favor unto you; Say: “Consider not your surrender unto me a favor. Rather it is God who has favored you by guiding you.”

[196] “I am hopeful that He will forgive me.”

[197] “Does he promise you that you. . .”

[198] “We have stipulated stations for it.”

[199] “And they want it to be crooked.”

[200] “He scares you with his friends.”

[201] “And from among his people Moses chose. . .”

[202] “And do not consummate the marriage.”

[203] “Nor (is their blame) upon those who approached you to provide them with mounts (and) you said to them ‘I can find nothing for you to ride; they then turned away (disappointed)”

[204] “Faces on that day will be resplendent.”

[205] ‘faces on that day will be fearful.”

[206] “. . .in the event that he leaves behind a substantial estate he ought to make a bequest to his parents. . .”

8-The elision of the vocative particle is common, as in the verses: “Hā antum ‘ūlā’i[207] (3:119); “Yūsuf a`rid”[208](12:29); “qāla rabbi innī wahana ‘l-`aźmu minnī”[209](19:4); “fātir ‘l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard”[210](6:14) Kirmani’s work *‘l-`Aja’ib* states that because the vocative implies a form of command, the particle *ya* of the word *rabb* is commonly omitted from the Qur’an out of respect and reverence.

9- The elision of the particle *qad* in the past tense of a verb that acts as a condition: “au jā’ūkum (qad) hasirat sudūrukum”[211] (4:90); and: “a nu’minu laka wa (qad) ittaba`aka ‘l-ardhalūn”[212] (26:111)

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[207] “You indeed, are the ones. . .”

[208] “(O!) Yusuf, say no more about this!

[209] (O!) My lord! My bones have weakened. . .”

[210] (O!) Creator of the Heavens and the Earth!

[211] “...Or they come to you with their hearts shriveled. . .”

[212] “Should we believe in you whilst only the contemptible follow you !”

10- The elision of the *la* of negation when it appears as the complement to an oath: This occurs when the object is in the imperfect form as in the verse: “Ta Allāhi tafta’u’‘[213](12:85) It does however, appear in other forms such as: “wa `alā alladhīna (lā)yutīqūnahū fidyatun”[214] (2: 184) that is, “those unable to bear the burden of fasting”. And the verse: “wa alqā fi ‘l-ard rawāsiya (li’allā) an tamīda bikum”[215] (16:15) that is “so that it would not wobble”.

11- The elision of the introductory *lām* as in “wa in lam yantahū `ammā yaqūlūna la yamassanna”[216] (5:73); and “wa in aţa`tumūhum innakum la mushrikūn”[217] (6:121)

12-The elision of the imperative *lam* as in the verse: “qul li `ibādī alladhīna āmanū (li) yuqīmū”[218] (31:14).

13- Omisson of the lam of the particle *laqad* is preferred in lengthy statements such as: “(la) qad aflaha man zakkāhā”[219](9:91)

14-The elision of the *nun* of emphasis as in the verse: “a lam nashrah”[220] (94:1) when *nashraha* is read in the subjunctive mood.

15-The elision of the nunation as in the following subjunctive moods: “qul huwa Allāh ahad (un). Allāh ‘l-samad”[221](1:112) and “wa lā ‘l-lail sābiq(un) ‘l-nahār”[222](36:40)

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[213] “By God! You will never stop mentioning Yusuf. . .”

[214] “ . . .and for those (un)able to there is a a penance. . .”

[215] “And He put firm mountains on the earth lest it wobble with you”

[216] “And if they do not desist from their utterances. . .will befall”

[217] “And if you were to obey them, you too would be of the polytheists.”

[218] “Tell those of my servants who believe that they ought to establish(prayer) . . .”

[219] “Successful is one who purifies his soul”

[220] “Did we not open. . .”

[221] “Say: ‘He is God, the One (*ahadu*); God, the Uncaused!”

[222] ‘. . .nor does the night overtake (*sabiqu*)the day”

16-The elision of the plural *nun* which appears in the following recitation: “wa mā hum bi dārrī (īn) bihī min ahad”[223]

17-The elision of the desinential inflections and the indeclinables as appears in the following verses that are recited without the vowel endings: “fa tūbū ilā bār(ī)kum”[224] (2:54), “ya’mu(r)kum” [225](2:67), “wa bu`ūla(t)hunna ahaqq” [226](2:227). Other examples are: “aw ya`f(ū) alladhi biyadihi uqdat ‘l-nikāh” [227](2:237), “fa`uwār(ī) sau`ata akhīhī” [228](2:237), and “mā baq(ī) min ‘l-riba” [229](5:31).

The Elision of More than a Single Word

1-The elision of two nouns in the genitive form, as in the verse “Fa innaha min taqwa ‘l-qulūb”[230](22:32) which when reconfigured would read: *fa inna ta`zīmahā min af`āl dhawī taqwa ‘l-qulūb*. In the verse: “Fa qabadtu qabdatan min athar ‘l-rasul.”[231] (20:96) the words omitted are *hāfir faras* after the word *athar*. And in the verse “tadūru a`yunuhum ka alladhi yughshā `alaihi min ‘l-maut” [232](33:19) the words *ka daurān `ain alladhi* are omitted after the word *a`yunuhum*. And finally, in the verse “wa taj`aluna rizqakum”[233] (56:82) the words *badal shukr* are omitted after the word *taj`aluna*.

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[223] “Nor will they cause anyone any harm thereby.”

[224] “Turn in repentance to your Sustainer.”

[225] “He commands you.”

[226] “And their own husbands have more right.”

[227] “Or he in whose hands is the marital contract agrees to forego.”

[228] “. . .to hide the dead body of his brother.”

[229] “. . .what remains of the interest.”

[230] “Such is the piety of the heart.’

[231] “I then took some dust from the hoof of the messenger.”

[232] “Their eyes rolling like one being smothered by death.”

[233] “And making your provisions.”

In the verse: “Fa kāna qāba qausain” [234](53:9) following the word kāna, three nouns of the genitive construction *miqdār masāfata rabbihi mithla* have been elided. Thus three subjects and one predicate of *kāna* have been omitted.

2-The elision of the two objects of the *zanna* category: In the verse “ayna shurakā`i alladhīna kuntum taz`umūn” [235](28:22) following the word taz`umūn the words *hum sharakāʾī* have been omitted.

3-The elision of the preposition and the word governed by it: In the verse: “khalaţū `amalan sālihan”[236] (9:102)the words *bi sayyiʼ* have been omitted. Similarly, in the verse “wa ākhara sayyi’an”[237] the words *bi sālihin* been omitted.

The elision of the conjunction and the conjoined word has been examined above.

4-The elision of the conditional particle and its verb: This generally occurs after some demand, as in the verse “Fa ittabi`ūnī yuĥbibkum Allāh”[238] (3:31) where the words *in ittaba`tum`ūnī* have been omitted. In the verse “Qul li `ibādī alladhīna ‘āmanū yuqīmu ‘l-salāt” [239](14:31) the words omitted are “*in qulta lahum yuqīmu.* Zamakhshari includes in this category the verse “fa lan yukhlifa Allāh `ahdahu”[240] (2:80) where the omitted words are: *in ittakhazhtum `ind Allah `ahd fa lan ukhālif Allahu*[241] are omitted. Abū Hayyān includes herein the verse “Fa lima taqtulūna anbiyā Allāh min qabl”[242] (2:91) where the words :*in kuntum āmantum bima unzila ilaykum fa lima taqtulūna*[243] are omitted

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[234] “At a distance of two bows length.”

[235] “Where then are my partners that you so allege.”

[236] “They mixed a good deed. . .”

[237] “. . .with another that was evil.”

[238] “Then follow me, and God will love you.”

[239] “Tell my servants who believe that they ought to establish prayer.

[240] “Then God will never renege on His covenant.”

[241] “If you take the covenant with God then God will never renege on His covenant”

[242] “Why then did you previously slay the apostles of God!”

[243] “If it is that you believe in that which was sent to you then why do you slay. . .”

5-The elisionof the apodosis as in the following cases.

- “Fa in istaţa`ta an tabtaghī nafaqan fi ‘l-ard au sullaman fi ‘l-samā’(*fa if`al*) ”[244](6:35)
- “wa idhā qīla lahum ittaqū ma baina aydīkum wa mā khalfakum la`allakum turhamūn (*a`radū*).”[245] (36:45) This is suggested by the verse that follows.
- “‘a ‘in dhukkirtum (la taţayyartum) ”[246] (36:19)
- “wa lau ji’na bi mithlihī madadan (*la nafida*)”[247] (18:109)
- “wa lau tarā idh ‘l-mujrimūna nākisū ru’ūsihim (*la ra’aita amran fazī`an*)”[248] (32:12)
- “wa laula fadl Allāh `alaikum wa raĥmatuhū wa anna Allāh ra’ūf -l-raĥīm (*la `adhdhabakum*)”[249] (24:20)
- “lau lā an rabaţnā `alā qalbihā (*la abdat bihī*).” [250](28:10)
- “wa lau lā rijāl mu’minūn wa nisā’ mu’mināt lam ta`lamūhum an taţa’ūhum (*la sallaţakum `alā ahl Makka*)” [251](48:25)

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[244] ‘If you are able to find a tunnel on earth or a ladder to the sky (then do so)”

[245] “And when they are told: ‘Beware the calamities at hand and those that have come to pass so that you may be shown mercy; (they turn away)”

[246] “When you are admonished (you call that an evil omen)”

[247] “Even if We aided it with something similar (it would have been exhausted).”

[248] “And if only you had seen the sinners with their heads hung low in the presence of their Lord (then surely you would have seen something horrid)”

[249] “If it was not for God's Grace and Mercy on you and that God is Kind and Merciful (He would surely have punished you)”

[250] “Had We not fortified her heart (she would have divulged it)”

[251] “Had it not been for the believing men and believing women that you had not known and would therefore have slain (He would have given you control over Mecca).”

6-The Elision of the nominal phrase of an oath as is the case with the opening statement “*By God”(wa Allāh)* in the verse: “ la ‘u’adhdhibannahū `adhāban shadīdan”[252] (27: 21) Or the elision of the complement “you will most certainly be resurrected”(*la tub`athunna*) after the following set of verses: “wa ‘l-nāzi`āt gharqan. . .”[253] (79:1-5) And in the verse: “Sād! Wa ‘l-Qur’ān dhi ‘l-dhikr”[254](38:1)the words “it is indeed inimitable”(*innahū la mu`jiz*) have been omitted. And finally, in the verse: “Qāf! Wa ‘l-Qur’ān ‘l-majīd”[255] (50:1) the words “things are not as they claim” (*ma ‘l-‘amr kamā za`amū*) have been omitted.

7-The elision of the causative sentence, as in the verse: [256]“li yuĥiqqa ‘l-ĥaqq wa yubţila ‘l-bāţila.”(8: 8) where the words “He did what He did”(*fa`ala mā fa`ala*) have been omitted.

8-The elision of several sentences, as is the case between the verse: “fa arsilūn. Yūsuf ayyuhā ‘l-siddīq”[257](12:46) Here, the following statements have been omitted: “I ask that you dispatch me to Yusuf that I may obtain an interpretation of the dream.’ He then appraoched him and said: O! Yusuf![258] **Conclusion**

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[252] “I will most certainly inflict on him a grievous punishment.”

[253] “By the pluckers of souls violently. . .and fulfil the behest”

[254] “Sād! By the Qur’ān, vested with loftiness!

[255] “Qāf! By the Glorious Qur’ān!”

[256] “. . .to establish the truth and invalidate evil”

[257] “Thus, I ask that you dispatch me.” and the verse “Yusuf! O! Attester to the truth!”

[258] “*Fa arsilūnī ilā Yūsuf li asta`birahū ‘l-ru’ā fa fa`alū. Fa atāhu fa qāla lahū: Yā Yūsūf*”

In some cases nothing is substituted for the elision whilst in others some evidence does point to the elision. This is so in the verse: “Fa in tawallau fa qad ablaghtukum mā ‘ursilta bihī ilaikum”[259](11:57) The apodosis is not the delivery of the message, for in reality, it precedes the turning away. The allusion here is that: “If you turn away, then its not my fault” (*fa in tawallau fa lā lauma `alayya*) that is, you have no excuses, for I have indeed, informed you”. And in the verse: “wa in yukadhdhibūka fa qad kudhdhibat rusulun min qablika.”[260] (35:4) Thus be not grieved, and exercise forbearance. And finally, in the verse: “wa in ya`ūdū fa qad madat sunnat ‘l-awwalīn”[261](8:38) That is, the same punishment will afflict them as did those before them.

Section

Kinds of Prolixities

Just as in the case of brevity the distinction was made between abridgement and elision, so too, a similar distinction is made in the case of prolixity between commentary and addition.

Prolixity through Commentary

The first is prolixity through multiple sentences, as in the statement of the Almighty which appears as several verses in the chapter, *‘l-Baqara*: “Inna fī khalq ‘l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard. . .”[262] (2:164) Great prolixity has been used because denizens of the Heavens as well as the earth, are being addressed, the intelligentsia among them, as well as the ignorant, those that is, who accept as well as those who feign acceptance, in every epoch and period. In the verse: “alladhīna yaĥmilūna ‘l-`arsha wa man ĥaulahū yusabbiĥūna bi ĥamdi rabbihim wa yu’minūna bihī”[263](40:7) the words “*yu’minūna bihī”* are superfluous because the faith system of the throne bearers is well known. But its explicit mention has both enhanced the virtue of faith, and encouraged it. Another example is the verse: “wa wail li ‘l-mushrikīna alladhīna lā yu’tūna ‘l-zakāt”[264] ((41:6) Whilst no polytheist pays the zakāt this has nonetheless, been characterized as one of his attributes in order to encourage the believers to comply and to warn against withholding.

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[259] “Now, if you turn away, then (know that) I have conveyed to you what I was commissioned to.”

[260] “If they give the lie to you, then (know) that they have also given the lie to the Messengers prior to you”

[261] “But if they persist then (we know their punishment) from those before them”

[262] “Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth. . .”

[263] “Those who bear the Throne, and those around , extol their Sustaner’s limitless praises and have faith in Him.”

Prolixity through Addition

There are several forms of this 2nd category. The first is when one or more particles that lend stress to the statement are included. Reference has already been made to particles of stress in the general discussion on particles.

The particles include: *inna*, *anna*, the dative *lām*, the oath, the *‘alā* used as an opening statement, *ammā*, *hā* for caution, *ka’anna* for stress in a simile, *lākinna* to stress emendation, l*aita* to stress hope, *la`alla* to stress expectation, the circumstantial pronoun, the pronoun of separation, *ammā* to stress a condition, *qad*, the letters *sīn* and *saufa*, the two *nūns* that stress an action, the absolving *lā*, *lan*, and *lamma* to stress a negative. Where the addressee is in denial or in doubt emphasis by way of the foregoing devices is recommended.

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[264] “Woe unto those polytheists who withhold the payment of zakāt”

The emphasis will vary depending on the strength of the denial or its weakness. Thus we find in the following verse where Christ's disciples were firstly rejected: "innā ilaikum mursalūn"[265] (36:14) emphasis is added by way of the particle *anna* and the use of a nominal sentence structure. In the second instance, after the addressee's strongly stressed: "Mā antum illā bashar mithlunā wa mā anzala 'l-raĥmān min shay' in antum illā takdhibūn" [266](36:15) the response: "qālū rabbunā ya`lamu innā ilaikum la mursalūn" [267](36:16) is equally stressed by way of an oath, *inna*, *lām*, and a nominal sentence.

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[265] "We are indeed messengers unto."

[266] "You are no more than human beings like us and the Beneficent has revealed nothing unto you; you are no more than liars!!"

[267] "They said: 'Our Lord knows that we are indeed messengers unto you"

These particles may also be used for emphasis in cases where the addressee does not deny the assertion, because the statement itself does not lead to its logical consequence. This is why he is considered a denier. On the other hand, the emphasis may be omitted even where the addressee is in denial because it is accompanied by irrefutable evidence that will, on close scrutiny, prompt a retraction. It is in this light that the statement of the Almighty appears: "thumma innakum ba`da dhālika la mayyitūn; thumma innakum yaum 'l-qiyāmat tub`athūn" [268](23:15) Death is stressed twice even if it is not denied, because the addressees, in their unmindfulness, have been reduced to the level of those who deny death. And despite its strong rejection only a single particle is used to stress resurrection because, given the irrefutable evidence of its occurrence, it was befitting that it not be denied. Thus the deniers were treated as believers in order to encourage open inquiry into the clear evidence provided. This is so in the statement of the Almighty: "lā raiba fīh" [269] (2:2) The particle lā is used to negate all doubt although there are many who are in doubt. But, based on the clear evidence that banishes doubt, the misgivings of the skeptics were reduced to nought, in the same way that denial was reduced to non-denial.

Zamakhshari has said: "Death, which is man's ultimate destiny, has been stressed not once, but thrice so that it remains his primary focus of attention, and that he not cease pondering over it. This is because his pursuit of this world is relentless, as if he will exist herein eternally. The verse on resurrection however, has only been emphasized by way of the particle *inna* because it is presented in such an irrefutable manner, that it can neither be contested, nor rejected.

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[268]: "Thus, after all this you are earmarked for death; and thus, on the day of Resurrection you will be raised from the dead."

[269] "There is no doubt whatsoever, therein!"

Tāj b. ʻl-Farkāh said: "Death is emphasised as a rebuttal to the views of the atheists who maintain that the human species is immortal. And the emphasis on the Resurrection was dispensed with on this occasion because of its it is stress elsewhere, in several places, together with a rebuttal of those who deny it. An example is the verse; "qul balā wa rabbī la tub`athunna"[270] (64:7) Another scholar has said that because the particle *lam* appears up front, followed by the conjunction that necessitates a union of the two parts of the sentence, the need for another *lām* is obviated. On occasion it--the lām that is–is used for emphasis for one whose curiosity is piqued because of an allusion to a matter that he has a prior interest in. This is so in the verse: wa lā tukhāţibnī fi alladhīna zalamū" [271](11:37) which implies, 'do not appeal to me. O! Noah! On behalf of your people." This statement simply alludes to the message and merely intimates that they deserve punishment. The addressees, therefore, are unclear at this point, about whether their fate in this regard was sealed or not. Thus, it was emphasized in response that : "They are indeed, drowned!" The same is true for the verse: "O! Mankind! Be conscious of your Lord. . ." (22:1) The enjoining of God consciousness, the appearance of its signs, and the punishement in the hereafter for its abandonment, caused the minds of the addressees to become curious about the nature of the Last Hour. In response, and to emphasize its inevitability, He says: [272]Inna zalzalat ʻl-sā`at shay'un `azīm" (22:1) to emphasize its inevitability. In similar vein is the verse: "wa mā ʻubarri'u nafsī"[273] (12:53) which puts the addressee in this quandary: How is it that the speaker, whose character is beyond reproach and unimpeachable, and who is known to have never indulged in evil, how is he unable to exonerate himself! In response, and by way of confirmation, the following verse states: "inna ʻl-nafs la ʻammāratun bi ʻl-sū"[274] (12:53)

On occasion, stress is laid in order to offer encouragement, as in: "fa tāba `alaih; innahū huwa ‘l-tawwāb ‘l-raĥīm” [275](2:37) Here, four particles of emphasis are used to lay stress, and to encourage the servants of God to beg for forgiveness. In section 40 mention has already been made of the particles of emphasis, their meanings, and their occurrences.

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[270] "Say! Verily, By my Lord! You will indeed, be resurrected."

[271] "Do not petition me about those who have been unjust."

[272] "Indeed, the convulsions of the Hour will be a mammoth event!"

[273] "I do not exonerate myself. . ."

[274] "Man's soul is certainly prone to evil!"

Note

Using *innā* and *lām* together in a single verse is tantamount to restating the verse thrice. This is because *inna* as such doubles the verse, and when the *lām* is also added it triples. It is reported from Kisā’ī that the *lām* serves to stress the predicate and *inna* to stress the subject. But there is some exaggeration here because the emphasis is on the relationship and not on the subject or the predicate. Similarly, the doubled *nūn* of emphasis implies a triple occurrence of the verb, while the single *nūn* implies a double occurrence of the verb. Sībawayh said: “In words such as “*yā ayyuhā*” the *alif* and the *hā* are joined to *ayya* for emphasis; the latter, so to speak, is restated twice, and the noun is then for notification.” Zamakhsharī concurs with him.

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[275] “He thus forgave him; and He is indeed, one who forgives repeatedly.”

Also, in the work *Nazm 'l-Qur'ān*, Jurjani says with regard to the verse: "wa yaqūl 'l-insān 'a idhā mittu la saufa 'ukhraju ĥayyan" [276](19:66) that the *lām* herein is not for emphasis, for the statement is a negation. How can one emphasize a negation! Rather, this is a report from the Prophet (s) with the particle of emphasis. The verse was therefore revealed accordingly.

2) Prolixity through the Use of Additional Letters

Ibn Jinnī has said: "Every letter added to a statement by Arabs serves to double the frequency of that statement. In his old work *'l-Kashshāf* Zamakhsharī has said: "The particle *bā* in usage with *mā* and *laisa* as part of the predicate, emphasizes the negative, just as the lām emphasizes the affirmative.

On being asked about the merit of using a particle for emphasis given that its elision takes nothing away from the meaning itself, one scholar replied: "This is something known to those who have a sense for such things; they are able to glean intimations through these particles that would otherwise have remained concealed. This is analogous to the sense possessed by one with ability to determine the meters of poetry, who would object to any change by omission in a verse. He then comments: "I find myself missing that repose which I would otherwise have enjoyed had the meter been maintained. In the same way, the elision of these particles have a tendency to alter the mood of someone with a penchant for them, and he thus finds himself reacting in different ways to their elision or inclusion.

Also, additions to particles and to verbs are infrequent, while additions to nouns are even less so. The following particles, as already explained in the section on particles, are subject to additions: *in, an, idh, idhā, ilā, amm, bā', fā', fī, kāf, lām, lā, mā, min,* and *waw*. As for verbs, *kāna* and *asbaha*, as illustrated by the following examples take additions: "Kaifa nukallimu man kāna fī 'l-mahd śabiyya" [277](19:29) and "fa aśbaĥū khāsirīn"[278] (5:53) Rummānī explains that one who suffers an affliction that worsens at night hopes for relief in the morning. But in the previous verse the verb '*aśbaha'* was used because their loss was suffered (in the morning) at a time when relief is hoped for; this therefore is not a case of prolixity.”

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[276] "And man will say 'What! Will I be brought back to life after I have Died!"

[277] "How are we to address one who is no more than a child in a cradle.!"

[278] "And they became losers."

As for the nouns, most grammarians are of the opinion that they do not take additions, but exegetes have on occasion, spoken of such prolixities. An example is the word *mithl* in the verse “Fa in āmanū bimithl mā āmantum bihī” [279](2: 137) The word *‘bimithl’* is a prolix form of *‘bimā’*

3-Emphasis by Way of Compound Statements

Of these there are four types:

1-Allegorical stress, where words such as *kull, ajma`, kilā, kilta,* etc. are used. An example is the verse: “fa sajada ‘l-malā’ikatu kulluhum ajma`ūn”((2:137) Such statements are used to remove doubts created by allegorical speech and to include that which is not explicitly included. Farrā’ asserts that *kulluhum* serves the foregoing purpose in the verse in question but that the word ajma`ūn serves to clarify that the angels prostrated together and not individually.

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[279] “If they believed in that in which we believed. . .”

2-Literal stress: This, in the first place, refers to the repetition of the first word by way of a simile. Examples are: “dayyiqan ĥa(ri)jan”[280] (6:125), and “gharābīb sūd”[281] (35:27) Saffār includes the verse “fī mā in makkannākum fīhi”[282] (46:26) in this category because both (*mā* and *in)* are negations. One other scholar includes the verse: “qīla irji`ū warā’akum fa iltamisū nur”[283] (57:13) where the word *warā’a* is not an adverb but a gerund having the same meaning as *irji`ū* . Thus the verse, according to him, would mean, “ *irji`ū, irji`ū.*”

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[280] “Closed and restricted. . . ”

[281] ‘Very black. . .”

[282] “. . .with that wherewith we had not established you.”

[283] “It shall be said: ‘Return to the rear, and seek light!”

Secondly, it refers to the repetition of the first word, by way of itself. This may apply to a noun, a verb, a particle, or even a complete sentence. The noun appears in verses such as: “qawārīira, qawārīra”[284] (74:16), and “dakkan, dakkan”[285](89: 21), the verb, in: “fa mahhil ‘l-Kāfirīn amhilhum” [286](86:17), a gerund, in: “hayhāta hayhāta limā tū`adūn” [287](23:36); a particle, in: “fa fī ‘l-jannati khālidīna fīhā” [288](23:36), and “a ya`idukum annakum idha mittum wa kuntum turāban wa `idhāman annakum. . .”[289](23:35); and a whole sentence, in: “fa inna ma`a ‘l-`usri yusran; inna ma`a ‘l-`usri yusran”[290](94:6). It is preferable, in the latter case however, that the repetition be by way of the conjunction *thumma*, as in the verse “wa mā adrāka mā yaum ‘l-dīn; thumma mā adrāka mā yaum ‘l-dīn”[291] (35:17) and “kalla saufa ta`lamūn; thumma kalla saufa ta`lamūn”[292](102:3) Also in this category is stress by way of the pronominal suffix to a detached pronoun as in: “uskun anta wa zaujuka ‘l-jannat”[293] (2:35), “fa idhhab anta wa rabbuka. . .”[294] (5:24), and “wa imma an nakūna naĥnu ‘l-mulqīn” [295](7:115) Stress also occurs in the form of a detached pronoun appearing twice, as in “Wa hum bi ‘l-ākhirati hum kāfirūn”[296] (12:37)

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[284] “Crystal cups! Crystal cups!”

[285] “Powder! Powder!”

[286] “Give the disbelievers a respite! Deal gently with them!”

[287] “Far! Very Far, is that which you have been promised.”

[288] “And in Heaven! In it will they reside eternally.”

[289] “Does he promise you that when you die and turn to dust and bones, that . . .”

[290] “For surely, with hardship goeth ease; For surely with hardship goeth ease.”

[291] “And what will inform you of the Day of Reckoning! Then, what will inform you of the Day of Reckoning.”

[292] “Nay! You will surely come to know. Nay! You will surely come to know.”

[293] “Reside! You and your spouse, in Heaven.”

[294] “Go! You and your Lord.”

[295] “. . .or shall we have the first throw.”

[296] “And it is in the Hereafter that they disbelieve.”

3-Stressing the verb by way of its infinitive, which obviates the need to repeat such a verb, and removes any doubt of an allegory in the verb. This, as Ibn `Usfūr and others have indicated, is in contrast to the previous case, where doubt because of the existence of an allegory in the predicate was addressed. On this basis some *Ahl ʿl-Sunna* scholars have rebutted Mu`tazilite denials of the ‘conversation’ in the verse: “wa kallama Allāhu Mūsā taklīman.”[297] (4:164) being literal. The stress *taklīman* in the foregoing verse removes the allegory from the verb, just as is the case with the verses: “Wa sallimū taslīma” [298](33:56), Yauma tamūr ‘l-Samā’maura wa tasīr ‘l-jibāl sairan” [299](52:10) and “jazā’ukum jazā’an maufūran”. [300](17:63)

The same however, is not true of the verse “Wa taźunnūna bi Allah źunūna” [301] (33:10) because the word is in the plural form of the word *źanna* which itself has multiple meanings. As for the verse “Illā an yashā’ rabbi shay’an”[302] (60:80) it is possible that the word s*hay’an* stems from the verb, or from *sha’n*, that is, a certain condition or state.

The basic method in this category is to stress the object by providing the requisite adjective, as is the case in: “Udhkurū Allah dhikran kathīran”[303](33:41) and “Wa sarriĥūhunna sarāĥan jamīlan”[304](33:49) At times however, the stress is rolled into a genitive construction with the adjective, as in “Ittaqū Allah haqqa tuqātihī” [305](3:109). At other times stress appears in the form of an infinitive of some other verb, or by way of a concrete noun substituting for an infinitive. Such is the case in the verse: “Wa tabattal ilaihi tabtīla” [306] (73:8) where ‘*tabattu*l’ is the infinitive of *battala*. In the verse “Wa Allah anbatakum min ‘l-ard nabātan”[307](71:17) the word is ‘*inbātan*’ because ‘’l-nabāt’ is a concrete noun.

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[297] “And God spoke directly to Moses”

[298] “And salute him with a greeting.”

[299] “On the day when the Sky will shake violently, and the mountains will move in a frightful manner.”

[300] “Your reward will be an ample one.”

[301] “And you had misgivings about God.”

[302] “”Except if my Lord was to will something.”

[303] “And remember God, often.”

[304] “And give them freedom, graciously.”

[305] “Fear God as it behooves Him.”

[306] “And devote yourself to Him in complete devotion.”

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[307] “And God produces you from the Earth, as creation.”

4-Stressing by way of a circumstantial phrase: Examples are: “Wa yauma ‘ub`athu ĥayyan”[308] (19:33); “Wa lā ta`thau fi ‘l-ard mufsidīn”[309](2:60); “Wa arsalnāka li ‘l-nās rasūlan” [310](4:79); “Thumma tawallaitum illa qalīlan minkum wa antum mu`ridūn” [311](2:83); “Wa ‘uzlifat ‘l-jannatu li ‘l-muttaqīn ghaira ba`īd”[312](50:31) Not included in this category is the verse “Walla mudbiran”[313] (27:10) because turning (tawliya) is not always away from something, as is clear from the verse: “Fa walli wajhaka shaţr ‘l-masjid ‘l-ĥarām” [314](2:144). The same is true for the verse “Fa tabassama dāĥikan”[315] (27:19) because the act of smiling may be for reasons other than amusement. And the same is true for the verse “Wa huwa ‘l-Haqq musaddiqan” [316](2:91) because the words *‘l-haqq* and *musaddiqan* mean two different things; the fact that something is true in itself does not mean that it is a testimony to that which appears prior to it.

4) **Repetition**

Contrary to the erroneous view shared by some, this form of prolixity is indeed more eloquent than the stress, and it is in fact a model of eloquence. It has several uses including:

- Confirmation: It has been said that speech that is repeated tends to confirm. And the Almighty in the following verse, has called attention to the purpose of repeating the parables and the admonitions in the Qur’an: “wa sarrafnā fīhi min ‘l-wa`īd la`allahum yattaqūn au yuĥdith lahum dhikran.”[317](20:113) Another objective of repetition is emphasis.

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[308] “On the day when I will be resurrected.”

[309] “Do not act corruptly, making mischief on the Earth.”

[310] “And We have sent you as a messenger to all mankind.”

[311] “Then you back tracked, all but a few among you–you are back trackers.”

[312] “And Heaven is drawn closer to the believers–it is not far off.”

[313] “He turned in flight.”

[314] “turn thy face towards the Sacred Sanctuary”

[315] “So he smiled, amused.”

[316] “It is the truth, an affirmation.”

[317] “And We have explained therein some of the admonishments so that they may take heed or that it may become a lesson for them.”

- Bringing greater attention to that which removes censure, so that the message may be well received. An example is the verse: “wa qāla alladhī āmana yā qaum ittabi`ūni ahdikum sabīl ‘l-rashād. Yā qaum innamā hādhihī ‘l-ĥayāt ‘l-duniya matā’”[318](40:38) The repetition of the vocative serves this purpose.
- In cases where the statement is lengthy and it is feared that the first part thereof may be forgotten repetition occurs in order to freshen up and renew the idea. This is so in the following verses: “Thumma inna rabbaka li alladhīna `amilū ‘l-sū’a bi jahālat thumma tābū min ba`di dhālika wa aslahu inna rabbaka min ba`di hā. . .” [319](16:119); “Thumma inna rabbaka li alladhīna hājarū min ba`di dhālika wa aslaĥū inna rabbaka min ba`dihā. . .”[320](16:110); “Wa lamma jā’ahum kitābun min `ind Allah. . .fa lamma jā’ahum mā `arafū kafarū bihī” [321](2:89); “Lā taĥsabanna alladhīna yafraĥūna bimā atau wa yuĥibbuna an yuĥmadū bimā lam yaf`alū fa lā taĥsabannahum bi mafāzatin min ‘l-`adhāb” [322](3:188); and “Innī ra’aitu aĥada `ashara kaukaban wa ‘l-shamsa wa ‘l-qamara ra’aituhum. . .”[323](12:4)

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[318] “And he who brought faith said: O! People! Follow me and I will lead you to the rightly guided path! O! People! The life of this world is but a temporary delight!”

[319] “Then your Lord, with regard to those who unknowingly indulged in evil then repented and made amends–your Lord thereafter. . .”

[320] “Then your Lord, with regard to those who migrated after being persecuted, and who then strived and endured–your Lord thereafter. . .”

[321] “And when the Book from God came to them. . . and when that which they recognized came to them, they denied it.”

[322] “Consider not those who revel in their deeds, and love to be extolled for deeds they had not performed–consider them not rescued from torment.”

[323] “I see eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I see them. . .”

- To glorify or terrify as in the following verses, "'l-ĥāāqqatu ma 'l-ĥāāqqatu. . ." [324](69:1), "'l-Qāri`atu, ma 'l-Qāri`atu. . ."[325] (101:1) and "Asĥāb 'l-yamīn ma asĥāb 'l-yamīn"[326](56:27). To those who say that this does not constitute a separate category but rather, belongs to the previous one because it shows emphasis through repetition, I would say that it is similar in ways and dissimilar in others. It is also less than the previous category in some ways and more, in others. This is why it belongs to a separate category. Stress, as was indicated previously, may or may not be by way of repetition. Furthermore, repetition may be for stress, but it may also serve an aesthetic purpose whilst stressing meaning.
- To act as a break between two objects that are repeated. Thus the verses: "Ittaqū Allah waltanźur nafsun mā qaddamat li ghad wa ittaqū Allah"[327] (59:18) and "inna Allah istafāki wa ţahharaki wa istafāki `alā nisā' 'l-`ālamīn."[328](3:42) Because the stress never separates from its object these two verses are considered instances of repetition and not word stress. The previous verses are also considered similarly where repetition occurred because of length.
- To show multiple semantical connections (*'l-Tardīd*): where there are a multiplicity of objects such that the first repeated word is different from the second, and so on.

In the following verse *tardīd* occurs in four places: "Allah nūr 'l-samāwāt wa 'l-ard; mathalu nūrihī ka mishkāt fīhā misbāh; 'l-misbāh fī 'l-zujāja; 'l-zujājat ka annahā kaukab durriyy. . ." [329](24:35) Some have included in this category the verse:"Fa bi ayyi ālā'i rabbikumā tukadhdhibān" [330](55:13,16. . .) which while appearing some thirty odd times, appears each time in a different context. Every word of stress is related to its own context, and this is why the same word appears more than thrice. In keeping with the rules governing stress, as explained by Ibn `Abd 'l-Salām and others, if these verses referred to the same thing then the stress should not have appeared more than thrice. In cases where the repetition is not indicative of a bounty, even the warning of some impending calamity is a bounty.

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[324] "The Reality; What is the Reality!

[325] "The striking Hour; What is the striking Hour!"

[326] "The companions of the right. Who are the companions of the Right!"

[327] "Fear God; and let each soul be mindful of what it dispatches for the morrow; and fear God."

[328] "God has indeed chosen you, cleansed you , and chosen you over the women of all the worlds."

[329] "God is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. The parable of His Light is that of a niche within which is a lamp; the lamp is encased in crystal; the crystal is like a luminous star."

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[330] "Now, which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny!

But some ask what possible bounty could exist in a verse such as: “kullu man `alaihā fān”[331](55:26) ! Several suggestions have been proffered, the best being that it underscores flight from this abode of grief to the abode of felicity. It also serves to deliver the believer and the virtuous from the ingrate. The same is true for the verse: “wail yauma’idhin li ‘l-mukadhdhibīn”[332] (77:24) because the Almighty mentions various parables each of which conludes with this verse. It is as if He is saying after every parable: “Woe, on that day, unto the one who denies this particular parable.” The same is true for the following verse of the chapter, *‘l-Shu`arā’*: “Inna fī dhālika la āyat wa mā kāna aktharuhum mu’minīn; wa inna rabbaka la huwa ‘l-`azīz ‘l-raĥīm”[333](26:8) which recurs after each parable, eight times in total. The allusion in each case is to the parable of a prophet mentioned immediately prior to the verse in question, and to the wisdom and signs inherent in that parable. But this part of the verse: “wa mā kāna akthruhum mu’minīn”[334] applies only to the people of that prophet only. Given its sense that only a small proportion of his people believed, the attributes *‘l-`zīz* and *‘l-raĥīm* have been invoked, to show that might will be used against those who did not believe in him and mercy will be showered on those who did believe. The same is true for the verse: “Wa laqad yassarnā ‘l-Qur’an li ‘l-dhikr fa hal min muddakir”[335](54:17) Zamakhsari said: These verses admonish each time they are heard, and warn that each of those instances was justified by its peculiar circumstances. The following appears in the work *`Arūs ‘l-Afrāh*: If the intent in each of the aforementioned examples is to explain the antecedents, then surely this would not be prolixity, but rather words, each designed to convey a meaning different from the other! I would respond that on the principle that consideration should always be given to the tenor of the word, then every word, despite the context, contains a general meaning, but it is repeated nonetheless, to be explicit in the succeeding context and implicit in all other contexts. It may be said however, that this implies emphasis (which should not be repeated more than thrice). I would agree; but this rule does not apply except in cases where the emphasis is consecutive. But invoking a thing in various places more than thrice, is not thereby, excluded.’

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[331] “All therein are bound to perish”

[332] “Woe on that Day unto those who deny the truth!”

[333] “There is indeed in that a sign, but most of them were not believers. And your Lord is Mighty, and Merciful.”

[334] “But most of them were not believers.”

[335] “We have indeed simplified the Qur'an for purposes of recall; is there therefore, someone who will recall!”

Similar to this are the examples mentioned by Ibn Jarīr in the following statements of the Almighty: “Wa li Allah ma fi ‘l-Samāwāt wa ma fī ‘l-ard; wa la qad wassaina. . .wa kāna Allah ghaniyyan ĥamīdan” and “Wa li Allah mā fī ‘l-samāwāt wa mā fī ‘l-ard, wa kafā bi Allah wakīlan”[336] (4:132) As to why the words “wa li Allah mā fī ‘l-samāwāt wa mā fī ‘l-ard” in these two verses, need repetition, one after the other, I would ascribe this to the differences in the information pertaining to the Heavens and the Earth. In the first case their dependence on their Creator and His self sufficiency are stressed, and in the second, it is the Creator's protection (*hifz*) of them, His knowledge of them, and His management (*tadbīr*) of them that are stressed. To the objection that nowhere in the verses *“wa kāna Allah ghaniyyan hamīdan; wa kafā bi Allāh wakīla*” do the words *tadbīr* and *hifz* appear, we would respond that this is equally true of the first verse, where no such justification for the usage of words such ‘protector’ and ‘controller’ appear. The Almighty has said: “Wa inna minhum la farīq yalwūna alsinatahum bi ‘l-kitāb li taĥsabūhu min ‘l-kitāb wa mā huwa min ‘l-kitāb” [337](3:78) Rāghib says: “The word *kitāb* in the first instance, refers to that which they penned with their own hands, as evidenced in the statement of the Almighty : “Fa wail li alladhīna yaktubūna ‘l-kitāb bi aydīhim” [338] (2:79) whereas the second *kitāb* refers to the Torah, and the third, to the genus itself. God has penned all of it; that is, everything that belongs to the Books of God and His speech. Another example of something erroneously considered repetition is “Qul yā ayyuha ‘l-kāfirūn. . .wa liya dīn” [339](109:1,2) The verse “lā a`budu mā ta`budūna” refers to the future, whilst “wa lā antum

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[336] “And unto God belongs all that is in the Heavens and on earth; and We have recommended. . .And God is Self sufficient, Praiseworthy. And unto God belongs all that is in the Heavens and on earth; and God suffices as a trustee.”

[337] “And among them is a group that contorts its tongue when reading the Book so that you may consider it part of the Book when in fact it is not part of the Book”

[338] “So woe unto those who pen the Book with their own hands”

[339] ‘Say! O! Ye Disbelievers! I do not worship that which you worship.”

`ābidūna mā a`bud" refers to the present. Also, for the remainder of the chapter, "mā a`bud" refers to the future, "wa lā ana `ābidun" to the present, "mā `abadtum" to the past, "wa lā antum `ābidūna" to the future, and "ma a`bud" to the present. Thus, in sum, the purpose was to deny him ever worshiping their gods in all three tenses.

The same is true for the verses: "Fa udhkurū Allāh `inda ‘l-mash`ar ‘l-Ĥarām wa ‘udhkurūhu kamā hadākum"[340] (2:198) and "Fa idhā qadaitum manāsikakum fa udhkurū Allah ka dhikrikum ābā'akum."[341](2:200) and "Wa udhkurū Allah fī ayyām ma`dūdāt" [342](2:203) The reference to *‘udhkurū* is different in each case: the first refers to the liturgies during the stop at Quzaĥ, in Muzdalifa. And the verse "Wa udhkurūhu kamā hadākum" is refers to the second and the third occasions. It is also possible, based on the verse that follows, "*fa idhā qadaytum*" that this is a reference to the *ifāda* circumambulation. The third ‘*dhikr*' refers to the pelting of the ‘devils, and the final to the pelting on the days of *tashrīq*.

Another example is the particle of retraction in the verse "Bal qālū adghāthu ahlām bal iftarāhu bal huwa shā`ir" [343](21: 5) and the verse "Bal iddāraka `ilmuhum fī ‘l-ākhirati bal hum fī shakk minhā bal hum minhā `amūn"[344](27:66)

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[340] "So remember God at the *‘l-Mash`ar ‘l-Harām* and remember Him as He has guided you."

[341] "And after you have completed your rituals remember God at the *‘l-Mash`ar ‘l-Harām.*"

[342] "And remember God during the designated days."

[343] "But they said: "Confused dreams; Nay! He has made them up; Nay! he is but a poet."

[344] "Nay! They have no knowledge of the Hereafter. Nay! They are in doubt about it! Nay! They are blind about it."

Also in this category is the verse “Wa matti`ūhunna `alā ‘l-mūsi`i qadaruhū wa `alā ‘l-muqtiri qadaruhū matā`an bi ‘l-marūf ĥaqqan `alā ‘l-muĥsinīn”[345](2:236) which is followed by the verse “Wa li ‘l-muţallaqāti matā`an bi ‘l-ma`rūf ĥaqqan `alā ‘l-muttaqīn” [346](2:241) The second was repeated to include all divorcees. The first verse is restricted to divorcees whose dowries have not been paid and whose marriages have not been consummated. Some say that this repetition is because the first verse gives no indication that giving is compulsory, which is why, when the verse was revealed, some of the Companions said: “If one so wishes he may give, or withhold.” This is reported by Ibn Jarīr.

Also in this genre is the repetition of parables, such as the verse “Wa mā yastawī ‘l-a`mā wa ‘l-baśīr wa lā ‘l-źulumāt wa lā ‘l-nūr wa lā ‘l-źill wa lā ‘l-harūr; wa mā yastawī ‘l-aĥyā’ wa lā ‘l-amwāt”[347] (35:19) The same is true for the parable of the hypocrites who appear as the ‘stokers of fire’ (*‘l-mustauqid nāran*) in the first section of the chapter *‘l-Baqara*, and later as those ‘caught in the rainstorm’(*ashāb ‘l-sayyib*). The second, according to Zamakhsharī is more apt, because it better clarifies the severity of their plight, their perplexity, and their bewilderment. This is why it was delayed, to show them stumbling gradually into greater punishment.

Also in this category is the repetition of parables, such as those of Adam, Moses, Noah and other Prophets. Some scholars have said: “God has mentioned Moses in one hundred and twenty places in His Book. Ibn ‘l-`Arabī has said in the work *‘l-Qawāśim*: “God has mentioned the parable of Noah in twenty five verses and the parables of Moses in ninety verses.” Badr b. Jamā`ah has compiled a work that he named *‘l-Muqtinaś fī fawā`id Takrār ‘l-Qiśaś*, in which he mentions the following benefits of repeating parables:

I. In every instance an addition, not appearing previously, is made, or for some reason new words are substituted for others; this indeed, is the style of the eloquent ones.

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[345] “And indulge them with some gift: the rich according to his means, and the poor according to his means; a gift that is reasonable, which the righteous consider a duty.”

[346] And for divorced women there must be reasonable maintenance, which the righteous consider a duty.”

[347] “The blind and the seeing are not equal, and so too, the darkness and the light, and the shade and the heat of the sun; the living and the dead are also not equal.”

II. If the parables were not repeated then the story of Moses would have remained peculiar to one community only and that of Jesus to some other community. This is equally true for all other parables because an individual who happened to listen to one such story from the Qur`ān would return to his people whilst some other individual would thereafter migrate taking with him what had been revealed after his predecessors had gone. God wanted all to share in these parables, so that some would be informed by them, whilst others could gain greater counsel.

III. The presentation of one speech in several forms and in different styles clearly points to much eloquence.

IV. Parables are repeated and not rules, because the wisdom and inspiration generated by the presence of but one rule are immense whilst the same is not true of parables.

V. God Almighty revealed this Qur'ān, and people were incapable of duplicating it, in whatever form they chose. He then further clarified their incapacity by repeating the parable in different places, as a declaration that that they were incapable of duplicating it in any of its forms.

VI. The Almighty challenged them by saying: "Bring forth a chapter like unto it"(2:23). If therefore, a parable was to have been mentioned only once, then some bedouin could very well have demanded that God Himself produce a chapter that is similar. Thus the Almighty revealed a multitude of chapters in every possible form, in anticipation of their arguments.

VII. The words of a parable that is repeated are increased or decreased, advanced or retarded, and they appear differently in every context. This serves to accentuate the singularly unique derivation of one meaning from multiple contexts such that the soul, which is so naturally disposed to relishing variety and freshness, is induced to listening attentively. It also serves to underscore the specialty of the Qur'ān in being able to repeat things without misusing any word or causing weariness. This is in stark contrast to the speech of all creatures.

In response to the query as to the wisdom of not repeating the parable of Joseph, but rather of presenting it in a single illustration as opposed to all other parables, it may be said that:

1. The parable contains the flirtatious conduct of women, and the condition of a single woman along with others besotted by the beauty of the most resplendent human being. In order to conceal and look past such behavior it was required that the parable not be repeated. Also, a tradition exists, authenticated by ‘l-Hākim in his work *‘l-Mustadrak*, forbidding the teaching of the *Joseph* chapter to women.
2. As opposed to parables which culminate calamitously, such as that of Satan, and that of the People of Noah, Hūd, Sālih and others, the parable of Joseph is unique in that hardship is followed by ease. Because of this peculiarity there was reason to narrate this parable such that it stood apart from all other parables.
3. The master, Abū Ishāq ‘l-Farā’īnī has said: “God has repeated the parables of the other apostles but narrated the parable of Joseph in a single illustration in order to stress the incapacity of the Arabs. It is as if the Prophet (s) was saying to them: “If this is my own contrivance, then do with the Joseph chapter what I have done with all the other chapters.”
4. I would say that a fourth explanation comes to mind, one that is supported by ‘l-Hākim in his work *‘l-Mustadrak*. It is that the Joseph chapter was revealed in response to the request of the Companions for a parable. The chapter was then revealed to fit the description of a parable: it was complete, in detail, and it had recreational value for them.
5. This, the most convincing of all explanations, states that the parables of the Apostles recur because the objective is to serve notice of the destruction of those who falsified their Messengers. Circumstances necessitated this repetition because of the repeated falsification of the Prophet (s) by the Meccan pagans. Each time they falsified a parable was revealed warning them of impending doom, as had been the fate of those who had previously falsified. It is for this reason that God Almighty has said in several verses that: “. . .the examples of previous generations have come to pass.”(8:38); and “Have they not seen how many communities before them We had destroyed.” (6:6) But the parable of Joseph was not meant to serve this purpose.”

This also serves as a response as to why the parables pertaining to the Companions of the Cave, the Two Horned One, Moses with the Green One (*‘l-Khidr*), and the Sacrifice, have not been repeated. But what of the parable of the birth of John and Jesus which appears twice and does not fit the foregoing profile! The first, I would say, is Meccan, appears in the chapter *kāf hā yā `ain sād*, and was revealed to address the people of Mecca..The second, however is Medinan, and was revealed to address the Jews and the Christians of Najrān when they came to Medina. It is for this reason that the said parable is accompanied by the dispute and the challenge (*'l-mubāhala).*

5-The Adjective

This occurs for several reasons.

I. To specify the indefinite noun, as in the verse: "Fa tahrīr raqabat mu'minat"[348]

II. To clarify or add meaning to the definite noun, as in: "wa rasūlihī 'l-nabiyy 'l-'ummiyy."[349]

III. To praise and acclaim. The attributes of God fall into this category. Examples are: "Bi ism Allāh 'l-Rahmān 'l-Rahīm; 'l-Hamd li Allāh rabb 'l-`ālimīn; 'l-rahmān 'l-rahīm; mālik yaum 'l-dīn"[350](1:1) "Huwa Allāh 'l-Khāliq 'l-Bāri'u 'l-Musawwir."[351](59:24) Also in this category is the verse: "yaĥkumu bihā 'l-nabiyyūna alladhīna aslamū."[352] This description serves to praise, to show the loftiness of Islam, to expose the Jews as being far removed from the community of Islam, the religion of all the apostles. This was said by 'l-Zamakhsharī.

IV. To rebuke, as in: "Fa ista`idh bi Allāh"[353] (16:98)

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[348] Then a believing slave should be set free."

[349] "And His Messenger, the unlettered Apostle."

[350] "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. All praise to God, the Lord of the Universe. The Beneficent, the Merciful. Master of the Day of Reckoning"

[351] "He is God! The Creator, the Inventor, the Bestower. . ."

[352] ". . .by which the submitting Apostles judged. . ."

[353] "Then seek refuge in God."

V. To remove ambiguity, as in: “Lā tattakhidhū ilāhain ithnain”[354](6:51) The word *ilāhain* is in the dual form, and so the word *ithnain* (two) that follows is an adjective designed to stress the prohibition against *shirk* (ascribing partners to God). It also indicates that the prohibition against taking two gods is simply because they are two, and not because they are helpless, and so on. When the concept of oneness is used without restriction it is meant to indicate the species. This is the equivalent of the Prophet (s) saying: “The Banu ‘l-Muttalib and I are one.” When used without restriction it negates quantity, as does the usage of the dual form. If instead, only *lā tattakhdū ilāhain* was used then there may have been the suspicion that the prohibition was against the taking of two separate species as gods, and not the taking of multiple gods from the same species. It is for this reason that the verse: “Innamā huwa ilāh wāhid”[355](6:19) stresses oneness. But what of the verse: “Fa in kānatā ithnatain.” [356](4:176) where the word *kānata* itself indicates two, and *ithnatain* by way of commentary, thus, does not serve as added explanation. ‘L-Akhfash and ‘l-Fārisī respond that it serves to simply underscore the number, and not to serve as an adjective. It was also possible to have used adjectives to convey that: “if they are small, or big, or good etc., but *ithnatain* shows that the share for two heirs hinges on them being two. The use of the dual pronoun would not have served the same function. It has also been said that the idea was to use the lowest number as in the statement: “If they are two or more. . .” which would then automatically include all higher numbers. This is similar to the verse: “Fa in lam yakūnā rajulain” [357](2:282) The preferable view is that the pronoun refers to two witnesses without any restrictions. Another example of an attribute of stress is the verse: “wa lā tā’ir yatīru bi janāhaihi.”[358](6:38) where the word *yatīr*, emphasizes the literal use of the word *ţair;* the latter term is also used figuratively to other things. Also, the word *bi janāhaihi* is used to emphasize actual flying, because it is sometimes used to refer metaphorically to the harshness of the enemy or to a quickness in walking. In like vein is the verse: “yaqūlūna bi alsinatihim”[359](48:11) because, as is clear from the following verse, the word *qaul* is also used metaphorically to other than the tongue: “wa yaqūlūna bi anfusihim”[360](58:8) The same is true for the verse: “wa lākin ta`ma ‘l-qulūb allatī fī ‘l-sudūr”[361] because the word heart is used metaphorically to refer to the eye, just as the eye is used to refer to the heart. This is the case in the verse: “alladhīna kānat a`yunuhum fī ghiţā’ `an dhikrī.”[362]

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[354] “Take not two gods.”

[355] “He is indeed but one God.”

[356] “And if they happen to be two.”

[357] “And if there are not available two men. . .”

[358] “Nor any bird flying around with its two wings”

Rule

A general adjective never appears after one that is specific. Thus instead of saying; “*rajul fasīh mutakallim* one says instead: *rajul mutakallim fasīh*. This rule is however problematic in the case of Ismā`īl in the verse: “wa kāna rasūlan nabiyyan” (19:51) In response it has been said that this was a circumstantial phrase and not an adjective. In other words, he was entrusted with the message whilst being a prophet. Examples pertaining to this category have appeared in the category of words that are advanced and retarded.

Rule

In cases where the adjective appears after an *idāfa* construction where the first word is a number it is permissible to attach the adjective to the first or the second part of the construction. An example of the first is the verse: ‘sab`a samāwāt ţibāqan”[363](67:3) and an example of the second is: “Sab`a baqarāt simān”[364]

Note

In cases where several adjectives apply to a single individual it is best that they be separated by way of a conjunction. An example is: “Huwa ‘l-awwal wa ‘l-ākhir wa ‘l-źāhir wa ‘l-bāţin”[365](57:3) In other cases, it is best that it be omitted. An example is: “wa lā tuţi` kulla ĥallāf mahīn; hammāzin mashshā’in bi namīm; mannā`in li ‘l-khair mu`tadin athīm; `utullin ba`da dhālika zanīm”[366](68:10-13)

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[359] “They say with their tongues.”

[360] “They say to themselves.”

[361] “But it is the hearts in the bosoms that grow blind.”

[362] “Those whose eyes have been under covers from Our remembrance.”

[363] “The seven Heavens, one above the other.”

[364] “Seven fat cows.”

Note

Where praise and censure occur it is more eloquent to alternate the word inflections. ‘L-Fārisī has said: “Where the adjectives appear in the context of praise and censure it is best that their inflections differ.” Because the situation requires prolixity, and because words which vary tend to be more variegated and more versatile, varying inflections provide a more complete objective. Uniformity leads to a singularity of meaning.”

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[365] “He is the First, and the Last, the Outer and the Inner.”

[366] “Then follow not every no-good oath monger, every slanderer going about casting calumnies, every stumbling block to good, every transgressor, malefactor, greedy, illegitimate.

An example where praise is used is the verse: “wa ‘l-mu’minūna yu’minūna bimā ‘unzila ilaika wa mā ‘unzila min qablika wa ‘l-muqīmīna ‘l-salāt wa ‘l-mu’tūna ‘l-zakāt.”[367] (4:162) and the verse: “wa lākinna ‘l-birra man āmana bi Allāh. . .wa ‘l-maufūna bi `ahdihim idhā `āhadū wa ‘l-sābirīn”[368] An exceptional recitation of the verse “‘l-ĥamd li Allāh rabb ‘l-`ālimīn”[369] with *rabb* in the accusative and the nominative cases as well. An example where censure is used is the verse: “wa imra`atuhū ĥammālat ‘l-ĥaţab”[370] (111:4)

6-The Substitution

The objective of the substitution is to clarify an ambiguity. And it serves to explain and to emphasize. As for the former, it is clear that when you say: *ra’aitu Zaidan akhāka* (I saw Zaid, your brother) you mean Zaid, the brother, and none other. As for the latter, however, it repeats the regent, as if belonging to two sentences, with the second alluding to the same thing as the first. This occurs either by way of congruency, which puts it into the category of the complete substitution (*badal ‘l-kull*), or by way of incorporation, which puts it in the category of the partial substitution (*badal ‘l-ba`d*), or by way of necessity, which puts it in the category of the inclusive substitution (*badal ‘l-ishtimāl*)

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[367] “And the Believers believe in that which was revealed to you and to those before you and they establish prayer and give the alms tax.”

[368] “But virtue is to believe in God. . . and those who abide by covenants when these are made, and those who persevere.”

[369] “All Praise is to God the Lord of the worlds.”

[370] “And his wife, the wood carrier.”

Examples of the first are: “ihdinā ‘l-sirāţ ‘l-mustaqīm; sirāţ alladhīna an`amta `alaihim.”[371](1:6-7); “wa innaka la tahdī ilā sirāţ mustaqīm; sirāţ Allāh”[372](42:52); and “la nasfa`an bi ‘l-nāsiyat; nāsiyat kādhibat khāţi’at”[373]

Examples of the second are: “wa li Allāh `ala ‘l-nās ĥijj ‘l-bait man istaţā`a ilaihi sabīla.”[374] (2:96); and “wa laulā daf` Allāh ‘l-nās ba`dahum bi ba`d.”[375](2:251)

Examples of the third are: “wa mā ansānīhu illa ‘l-shayţān an adhkurahū”[376](1863); “yas’alūnaka`an ‘l-shahr ‘l-ĥarām qitālin fīhi; qul qitāl fīhi kabīr.”[377] (2:217); “qutila asĥāb ‘l-‘ukhdūd; ‘l-nār.” [378](85:5); and “la ja`alnā liman yakfuru bi ‘l-raĥmān li buyūtihim...”[379]

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[371] “Guide us to the straight path, the path of those that You have shown your bounty to.”

[372] “That you are guiding to the straight path, the path of God.”

[373] “We will certainly take hold of him by his forelocks; sinful, deceitful forelocks.”

[374] “And mankind, those who are by the means, are duty-bound to God to perform the pilgrimage.”

[375] “If God did not keep one set of people in check by way of another. . . ‘

[376] “And no one but Satan caused me to forget to mention it.”

[377] “They ask you about fighting in the sacred months; say: “Fighting therein is a grave offense.”

[378] “May the companions of the trench perish; a Fire. . .”

[379] “And We shall prepare for those who disavow the Beneficent, for their homes. . .”

Some have included in this category the complete substitution for the partial, of which I was able to find one example in the Qur’ān, in the form of:the verse: “yadkhulūn ‘l-jannata wa lā yuźlamūna shay’an; jannātu `adn.”[380](19:60-61) The words *jannāt `adn* is a partial substitution for *jannat*, and it serves to confirm that there several heavens and not just one. Ibn ‘l-Sayyid has said: “Not every substitution serves to remove some ambiguity found in the word for which it is substituted. Some substitutions are meant to stress, even if the word before it needs no stress. An example is the verse: “wa innaka la tahdī ilā sirāt mustaqīm; sirāt Allāh.” [381](42:52) Do you not see that if the second *sirāt* was not mentioned no one would have doubted that the *sirāt mustaqīm* is the ‘path of God’! Sībawayh has written that some substitutions serve only to stress.” Ibn `Abd ‘l-Salām has included the verse: “wa idh qāla Ibrāhīm li abīhi Azar”[382] (6:74) in this category and said: “The substitution does not clarify because the word *’ab* is not confused with anyone else. In response it has been said that the term also applies to the grandfather, and to show therefore, that the word was used literally, a substitution was provided.

7-**The Explanatory Apposition (*Aṭf ’l-Bayān*)**

It acts like an adjective in providing clarification, but is different, in that a specific word is used to clarify. In contrast, the adjective is used to point to a meaning inherent in the word before it. And in making the distinction between the adjective and the substitution Ibn Kaisān asserts that the substitution is the actual objective, which was simply confirmed by the word for which it was substituted (*mubdal minhu)* But both the explanatory apposition and the conjunction are specifically intended. In the work *Sharḥ ’l-Kāfiya* Ibn Mālik had this to say: “The explanatory apposition functions like the adjective in complementing the word before it, but is different in that it does so through commentary and explanation and not by pointing to a meaning inherent in the preceding word or by a way of causation. And it functions as an emphasis by strengthening its meaning, but is different in that it does not remove the sense of the allegorical. And it functions as a substitution in its ability to be independent, but is different in that it cannot be rejected. Examples are: “Fīhi āyāt bayyināt maqām Ibrāhīm”[383](3:97) and “min shajarat mubārakat zaitūnat” [384] (24:35) It sometimes appears, as in the verse: “ja`ala Allāh ‘l-ka`bat ‘l-harām”[385] (5:9) for reasons of tribute alone, and not clarification. The phrase *'l-bait 'l-ĥarām* therefore, is an apposition of tribute and not of explanation.

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[380] “They shall enter Paradise, and be not wronged at all; the Garden of Eden.”

[381] “That you are guiding to the straight path, the path of God.”

[382] And recall Abraham saying to his father, Azar.”

8-The Apposition of One of the Synonyms on the Other

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[383] “In it are signs, like the station of Abraham.”

[384] “Of a blessed tree, an olive.”

[385] “God has made the Kaaba, the Sacred Sanctuary. . .”

Here also, the objective is emphasis. Included herein are the following verses: “Innamā ‘ashkū baththī wa ĥuznī[386] (12: 86); “Fa mā wahanū limā asābahum fī sabīl Allāh wa mā da`ufū”[387] (3:146); “fa lā yakhāfu źulman wa lā hadman”[388](20:112); “Lā takhāfū darakan wa lā takhshā”[389](20:77) “lā tarā fīhā `iwajan wa lā amta”[390](20:107) ‘l-Khalīl has said that the words *`iwaj* and *amt* have the same meaning. Also: “sirrahum wa najwāhum”[391](9:28) “shir`atan wa minhājan”[392](5:48) “lā tubqī wa lā tadharr”[393](74:28) “illā du`ā’an wa nidā’an”[394](2:171) “aţa`nā sādatana wa kubarā’anā”[395](33:67) “Lā yamassunā fīhā nasab wa lā yamassunā fīhā lughūb”[396](35:35)Here the words *nasab* and *laghab* are similar in both form and meaning. Other verses are: “salawāt min rabbihī wa raĥmat.”[397](2:157) “`udhran au nudhran”[398](77:6) According to Tha`lab both these words mean the same thing.

‘L-Mubarrad denies the existence of this genre in the Qur’an, and interprets the foregoing words as having different meanings. And one scholar has said: “One solution is to consider these words together as having a meaning which would not otherwise have obtained if viewed individually. It is thus the construction that engenders added meaning. And just as multiple words provide additional meaning so too is the case with additional letters.”

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[386] “I complain of my sorrow and grief only to God.”

[387] “They lost not courage by what had befallen them in the Path of God, nor did they weaken.”

[388] “. . .he shall not have to fear injustice or loss of reward”

[389] “. . .and fear not being overtaken, or being afraid.”

[390] “You will see neither crookedness therein, nor curvature.”

[391] ‘Their secrets and their private counsels”

[392] “A law and a clear path.”

[393] “It spares not, nor does it leave whole.

[394] “But calls out and cries.”

[395] “We followed our leaders and the important ones among us.”

[396] “Will not touch us therein. . .”

[397] Blessings from his Lord, as well as Mercy.”

[398] “To cut off excuses or to admonish.”

9- The Apposition of a Specific Word on a General

It serves to underscore its merit, as if to say that the word in question is not part of the general category. thus categorizing the qualitative variation as tantamount to a variation in essence. Abū Hayyān quotes his master Abū Ja`far b. ʻl-Zubair as saying: “This kind of apposition is called stripping (*tajrīd*) because it is as if the word has been stripped from the sentence and singled out for special mention. Examples of this are: “ĥāfiźū `alā ʻl-salawāt wa ʻl-salāt ʻl-wusţā”[399](2:238) “man kāna `aduwwan li Allāh wa malāʼikatihī wa rusulihī wa jibrīla wa mīkāla”[400](2:157) “waltakun minkum ʻummatun yad`ūna ilā ʻl-khair wa yaʼmurūna bi ʻl-ma`rūf wa yanhauna `an ʻl-munkar”[401](3:104) “Wa alladhīna yumassikūna bi ʻl-kitāb wa aqāmū ʻl-salāta”[402](7:170) The establishment of prayer is part of holding fast to the Book. This ritual comes in for special mention in order to underscore its lofty position as the very pillar of the faith. Gabriel and Michael are mentioned specifically as a rebuttal to the Jews and their animosity towards the former. Michael is mentioned jointly because he is the angel of food which is what sustains the body, just as Gabriel is the angel of revelation which is what sustains the hearts and souls. It has also been said that because Gabriel and Michael are the commanders of the angels they were not included in the word angels at the outset. This is like the commander of an army who is not specified as being in the army. Kirmānī mentions this in the work *ʻl-`Ajāʼib*.

Also in this category are the verses: “Wa man ya`mal sūʼan au yaźlim nafsahū”[403](4:110) “wa man aźlamu minman iftarā `ala Allāh kadhiban au qāla ʻūĥiya ilayya wa lam yūĥā ilaih shayʼ”[404](6:93) With regard to the former verse, it is included on the premise that this kind of apposition is not restricted to the conjunction *waw*. This is the view of Ibn Mālik with regard to this verse as well as those before it. In the latter verse the conjunction is mentioned specifically in order to further underscore its reprehensibility.

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[399] “Protect your prayers, and particularly the middle most one.”

[400] “Whosoever is an enemy unto God and the angels, and His messengers, and Gabriel and Michael. . .”

[401] “And let there be from among you one group that invites to the good, enjoining virtue and forbidding iniquity.”

[402] “Those who hold fast to the Book and establish prayer.”

[403] “Whosoever does evil or is injurious to himself.. . “

[404] Who could be more unjust than one who utters falsehood against God, or who says that he has received

Note

The words *`ām* and *khās* here, refer to cases where the first statement incorporates the second, and not to the technical terms used in Jurisprudence.

10-The Apposition of a General Word on a Specific

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revelation when in fact nothing at all has been revealed to him"

Some have erroneously denied the existence of this category. Its purpose is clear, and that is, to generalize. The first statement is mentioned specifically in order to stress its stature. Examples hereof are: “inna salātī wa nusukī” [405](6:162) The word *nusuk* means worship, and it is thus general. Other verses are: “ātaynā sab`an min ‘l-mathānī wa ‘l-qur’ān ‘l-`aźīm” [406](15:87); “rabb ighfir lī wa li wālidayya wa li man dakhala baytiya mu’minan wa li ‘l-mu’minīn wa ‘l-mu’mināt” [407](71:28); “Fa inna Allāh huwa maulāhu wa jibrīlu wa sāliĥu ‘l-mu’minīn wa ‘l-malā’ikatu ba`da dhālika źahīr” [408](66:4)

Zamakhsharī includes the verse: “wa man yudabbir ‘l-‘amr”[409](10:31) which appears after the verse: “Qul man yarzuqukum”[410](10:31)

11-Clarity Following Opacity (*‘l-Idāĥ ba`da ‘l-Ibhām*)

The fraternity of rhetoricians say: “One adopts prolixity when wanting to obscure and then to clarify. This is useful in that it enables one to visualize the meaning in two separate modes: the clear and the opaque. Or it strengthens the effect on the psyche, because of its occurrence in response to a request. After all, knowing something through effort is more effective than knowing without effort. Or it serves to satisfy the desire for more knowledge. When the mind perceives any object from one perspective it longs to do so from the other perspectives as well. And when such knowledge of the other perspectives is gained gradually it is more satisfying than knowledge gained in a single instance.”

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[405] ‘Indeed my prayers and my sacrifices. . .”

[406] “We have been given the seven oft recited couplets and the noble Qur'an”

[407] “My Lord! Forgive me, and my parents and the one who enters my house in faith, and the believing men and the believing women.”

[408] “Then it is God who is His Master, and so is Gabriel, and the virtuous believers, and the angels thereafter, in support.”

[409] “And who administers the affairs.”

[410] “Say: Who provides you with sustenance.”

Examples hereof are: “Rabbi ishraĥ lī sadrī” [411](20:26) The word *ishraĥ* indicates a desire for an explanation about something, whilst *sadrī* explains and clarifies what that is. The same is true for the verse: “wa yassir lī amrī” [412] (20:26) in that the situation to which he is being commissioned points to an encounter with hardship. The same is true for the verse: “ `A lam nashraĥ laka sadraka” [413](9:36) This position requires special emphasis because it is one of indebtedness and loftiness. The same is true of the verse: “wa qadainā ilaihi dhālika ‘l-amr anna dābira hā’ulā’i maqţū` musbiĥīn.” [414](15:66)

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[411] “My Lord! Expand my bosom.”

[412] “And felicitate my affairs.”

[413] “Have We not expanded your bosom!”

[414] “And We informed him of that decree that the root of those sinners was to be cut off in the morning.”

Also in this category is the case of furnishing details after a condensed statement. An example is the verse: “inna `iddat ‘l-shuhūr `inda Allāh ithna `ashara shahran. . .minhā arba`at ĥurum.” [415](9:36) And the opposite of the foregoing, as in the verse: “thalāthata ayyām fī ‘l-ĥajj wa sab`at idhā raja`tum; tilka `asharat kāmilat.”[416](2:196) The word *`asharat* is repeated to remove any doubt about the conjunction ‘*wā*’ meaning ‘*au*’ in which case the number three would be included in the number seven. This is so with the verse: “khalaqa ‘l-`ard fī yaumain” after which appears: “wa ja`ala fīhā rawāsiya min fauqihā wa bāraka fīhā wa qaddara fīhā aqwātahā fī arba`at ayyām” [417](41:10) Here the words “four days” include the “two days” of the previous verse, and are therefore, not four separate days. This is the best explanation of the verse, one that Zamakhsharī alluded to, Ibn `Abd ‘l-Salām gave preference to, and ‘l-Zamlakānī confirmed in his work, *Asrār ‘l-Tanzīl*. He said, “comparable to it is the verse: “wa wā`adnā Mūsā thalāthīn lailatan wa atmamnāhā bi `ashar.” [418](7:142) It dispels the possibility that the “ten” is not part of the pledge.” Ibn `Askar has said: “The purpose of appointing thirty days first, followed by ten, was to kindle and then rekindle his anticipation of the end of the appointed period. He would thus be prepared, attentive, and single minded. If however, an appointment of forty days was made at the outset it would have been all the same to him, but because it was separated, his mind sensed how close the end was, and his resolve was renewed as never before.

In the work *‘l-`Ajā’ib* Kirmānī has said that there are eight answers with regard to the verse: “tilka `asharat kāmilat.” [419](2:196): Two are from the exegesis, one from law, one from grammar, one from language, one from rhetoric, and two from arithmetic. I have arranged them in the work *Asrār ‘l-Tanzīl*.

12-Commentary

The fraternity of rhetoricians say: “Where some statement contains ambiguity and obscurity

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[415] “Verily, the tally of months with God is twelve. . .of them four are sacred”

[416] “Three days during the pilgrimage and seven days on your return; together they are ten”

[417] “And He inserted firmaments above it, and blessed it, and decreed its sustenance therein, all in four days”

[418] “And We appointed for Moses thirty days, and completed it with ten.”

[419] “They were ten all together’

another is added to remove the same and to provide added commentary. Examples are:

- "Inna 'l-insān khuliqa halū`an; idhā massahū 'l-sharr jazū`an wa idhā massahu 'l-khair manū`an."[420](70:19-21) The statement *idhā massahū* is commentary for the word *halū`* as Abū 'l-`Aliya and others have said.
- "'l-Qayyūm; lā ta'khdhuhū sinat wa lā naum."[421](2:255) In the work *Sharĥ 'l-Asmā' 'l-Husnā'* Baihaqī has said that the statement *lā ta'khudhuhū sinat* is commentary for the word *'l-qayyūm*.
- "Yasūmūnakum sū' 'l-`adhāb; yudhabbiĥūna. . ." [422](2:49) The statement *yudhabbiĥūna* and what follows is commentary for the word *yasūm*.

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[420] "Man is certainly created impatient: when evil afflicts him he is discontented; and when good touches him he is niggardly"

[421] "The Self Standing Fount of all creation; neither sleep nor slumber. . ."

[422] "He afflicts you with the worst of punishments : he slaughters. . ."

- “Inna mathala `Isā `inda Allāh ka mathal Adam;   khalaqahū min turāb. . .”[423](3:59) The statement *khalaqahū* and what follows is commentary for the word *mathal.*
- “Lā tattakhidhū `aduwwī wa `aduwwukum auliyā’; tulqūna ilaihim bi ‘l-mawaddat.”[424](60:1) The statement *tulqūna* is commentary for “the taking of confidants”.
- “‘l-Samad; lam yalid wa lam yūlad. . .”[425](112:2,3) Muhammad b. Ka`ab ‘l-Qurtubī has said: “The statement *lam walid* . . . is a commentary of the word *‘l-samad*. This appears frequently in the Qur’an. Because the commentary of a thing is attached to and complementary to it, and tantamount to being a part of it, it is deemed inappropriate to pause before such a statement.

13-Placing an Overt Noun in the place of a Pronoun

I came across s single publication in this regard, that of Ibn ‘l-Sā’igh. This genre has many uses, including:

I. Added affirmation and fixation, as in the following verses: “Qul huwa Allāh aĥad; Allāh ‘l-samad” [426](112:1,2) Reconfigured, the verse would read: *huwa ‘l-samad.* Other verses are: “wa bi ‘l-ĥaqq anzalnāhu wa bi ‘l-ĥaqq nazal”[427](17:5-10); “inna Allāh la dhū fadl `ala ‘l-nās wa lākinna akthara ‘l-nās lā yashkurūn”[428](40:61); “li taĥsabūhu min ‘l-kitāb wa mā huwa min ‘l-kitāb; wa yaqūlūna huwa min `ind Allāh wa mā huwa min `ind Allāh” [429](3:78)

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[423] “The nature of Jesus with God is like the nature of Adam: He created him of dust. . .”

[424] “Take not my enemy and your enemy as a confidant; showering affection on them. . .”

[425] “. . .the Prime Cause; He neither begets nor is He begotten.”

[426] “Say: “He is the One God; God is the Prime Cause”

[427] “And it is in truth that We revealed it, and it is in truth that it came down”

[428] “God is indeed, The Munificent on men; but most men are not grateful”

[429] “. . .to consider it part of the Book, whilst it is not part of the Book and they say it is from God, but it is not from God.”

II. To exalt, as in the following verses: “wa ittaqū Allāh wa yu`allimukum Allāh; wa Allāh bi kull shay’ `alīm”[430](2:282); “ ‘ulā’ika ĥizb Allāh alā inna ĥizb Allāh hum ‘l-mufliĥūn” [431](58:22); “wa Qur’ān ‘l-fajr inna qur’ān ‘l-fajr kāna mashhūdan”[432](17:78); “wa libās ‘l-taqwa; dhālika khair”[433](7:26)

III. To demean, as in the following verses: “ ‘ulā’ika ĥizb ‘l-shaiţān; alā inna ĥizb ‘l-shaiţān hum ‘l-khāsirūn”[434](58:19); and: ‘Inna ‘l-shaitān yanzaghu bainahum”[435](17:53)

IV. To remove doubt in cases where the pronoun gives the impression that it refers to other than the preceding noun.. Thus with regard to the verse: “qul allāhumma mālik ‘l-mulk tu’ti ‘l-mulk man tashā’”[436](3:26) Ibn ‘l-Khashshāb tells us that if *tu’tīhi* were to be used instead then it would have wrongly suggested the previous word. In the verse: “‘l-zānnīn bi Allāh zann ‘l-sau; `alaihim dā’irat ‘l-sau”[437](48:6) if *alaihim dā’iratuhū* were used instead then it would have wrongly suggested that the pronoun refers to God, Almighty. And the verse: “fa bada’a bi `au’iyatihim qabl wi`ā’i akhīh thumma istakhrajahā min wi`ā’i akhīh” [438](12:76) does not say *minhu* lest the impression be given that the pronoun refers to the brother. This would then have wrongly suggested that Joseph had in fact wanted it to emerge from his bag, and this was not so. Inflicting injury is something that high minded souls would reject, and in order to reject this the overt noun was repeated. Also, the words *min wi`ā’ihī* were not used lest the impression be created that the pronoun refers to Joseph. The pronoun that does refer to him is embedded in the words *istakhrajahā*.

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[430] “And fear God, and God will teach you; for God is All Knowing of all things.”

[431] “They are the partisans of God, and the partisans of God are indeed the successful ones.”

[432] “And the recitation at dawn; verily, the recitation at dawn is witnessed.”

[433] “And the raiment of piety; that indeed is the best.”

[434] ‘They are the partisans of Satan; and the partisans of Satan are indeed, the losers.”

[435] ‘Satan does indeed, instigate among them.”

[436] “Say! O God! Custodian of all dominion; you give dominion. . .”

[437] “The thinkers who think evil thoughts about God; the circle of evil will be upon them.”

[438] “He thus began with their satchels before his brother's satchel, and then extracted it from his brother's satchel.”

V. To inculcate awe, and to instil fear into the listener by invoking the name that would trigger that response. This is equivalent to one saying: “The Caliph, the Leader of the Faithful orders you to do so.” In this category is the verse: “inna Allāh ya’murukum an tu’addu ‘l-amānāt ilā ahlihā”[439](4:58), and the verse: “inna Allāh ya’muru bi ‘l-`adl”[440](16:90)

VI. To strengthen the call for a prescribed performance, as is the case with the verse: “fa idhā azamta fa tawakkal `ala Allāh; inna Allāh yuĥibb ‘l-mutawakkilīn”[441](3:159)

VII. To glorify an order, as with the following verses: “‘a wa lam yarau kaifa yubdi’u Allāh ‘l-khalq thumma yu`īduhū; inna dhaālika `ala Allāh yasīr” [442](29:19); “Qul sīrū fi ‘l-ard fa ‘undhurū kaifa bada’a ‘l-khalq”[443](29:20); “Hal atā `ala ‘l-insān ĥīn min ‘l-dahr lam yakun shay’an madhkūran; innā khalaqnā ‘l-insān. . .”[444](76:1,2)

VIII. To enjoy mentioning it, as in the verse: “wa aurathnā ‘l-ard natabawwa’u min ‘l-jannat. . .”[445](39:74) where the words *minhā* are not used. Thus, it turned away from the earth and towards paradise.

IX. To get to the attributes of a particular overt noun. An example is the verse: “fa āminū bi Allāh wa rasūlihī ‘l-nabiyy ‘l-‘ummiyy alladhī yu’minu bi Allāh”[446](7:158) which appears after the verse: “innī rasūl Allāh” It does not say *fa āminū bi Allāh wa bī* to allow mention of the attributes, and to make known that the person who must be believed and emulated is imbued with these attributes. If the pronoun was used this would not have been possible because it is not described.

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[439] “God does indeed, order you to deliver trusts to its rightful owners.”

[440] “God does indeed, enjoin justice.”

[441] “And after you have decided put your trust in God; God does indeed, love those who place their trust in Him.”

[442] “Have they not pondered how God initiates creation and then repeats it; these things are indeed, easy for God.”

[443] “Say: “Crisscross the earth and take heed of how creation was initiated.”

[444] “Has there ever come to man a moment in time when he was nothing to speak of! We have created man. . .”

[445] “And made us inherit the earth; we can dwell in paradise. . .”

[446] “SO, believe in God and His messenger, the unlettered apostle who believes in God. . .”

X. To stress the motivation for a rule, as in the case of the following verses: “fa baddala alladhīna zalamū qaulan ghair alladhī qīla lahum [447](2:59); “fa anzalnā `ala alladhīna zalamū rijzan” [448] (2:59); “fa inna Allāh `aduww li ‘l-kāfirīn”[449](2:58) In all these cases the verse did not say *lahum* to make known that whosoever is antagonistic towards these persons is a disbeliever, and that God is antagonistic towards him for his disbelief. Other examples are: “fa man azlama min man iftarā `ala Allāh kadhiban au kadhdhaba bi āyātihī; innahū lā yufliĥu ‘l-mujrimūn” [450](10:17); “wa alladhīna yumassikūna bi ‘l-kitāb wa aqāmū ‘l-salāt innā lā nudī`u ajr ‘l-musliĥūn” [451](7:170); “inna alladhīna āmanū wa `amilū ‘l-sāliĥāt innā lā nudī’u ajr man aĥsana `amal”(18:30) [452]

XI. To generalize, as in the case of the verse: “wa mā ‘ubarri’u nafsī; inna ‘l-nafsa la ammāratun bi ‘l-sū’”[453](12:53) Here the words *innahā* are not used lest it be implied that this applies specifically to his soul. Other examples are: “‘ulā’ika hum ‘l-kāfirūn Ĥaqqan” [454](4:151) and: “wa a`tadnā li ‘l-kāfirīn `adhāban” [455](4:37)

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[447] ““Those who were iniquitous changed the statement to one not told to them.”

[448] “So, We sent down to those who were iniquitous a plague”

[449] “Then God is the enemy of the dibelievers.”

[450] “Who is more unjust than one who imputes falsities to God who belies His signs; The sinners will surely not be successful”:

[451] “As for those who hold fast to the Book and establish prayer, We will surely not let the reward of the virtuous come to nought.

[452] “Those who believe and do good deeds, We will certainly not let the reward of those who did good come to nought.”

[453] ‘I am certainly not exonerating my inner self for the inner self compels. . .”

[454] “They, in truth, are the disbelievers.”

[455] “And for the disbelievers We have prepared a punishment.”

XII. To specify, as in the case of the verse: “wa imra’atan muslimatan in wahabat nafsahā li ‘l-nabiyy”[456](33:50)The verse does not say *laka* to make clear that this applies exclusively to him.

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[456] “As for a believing woman who offers herself inmarriage to the Apostle. . .”

XIII. To allude to the fact that the rule pertaining to the previous statement does not apply in this case. Thus in the verse: "fa in yasha'i Allāh yakhtim `ala qalbika wa yamĥu Allāh 'l-bāţil" [457](42:24) the words *wa yamĥu Allāh* indicate a fresh start, and are thus not governed by the condition.

XIV. To show likeness, as in the verse: ". . .a`ūdhu bi rabb 'l-nās. . ."[458](114:1) This was mentioned by the master, `Izz 'l-Dīn. Ibn 'l-Sā'igh illustrates this with the verse: "khalaqa 'l-insān min `alaq" which is followed by the verses: "`allama 'l-insān mā lam ya`lam; kallā inna 'l-insān la yatghā" [459](65:2,5,6) In the first case the word *insān* refers to the species, in the second to Adam, or to the one who was taught to write, or to Idrīs, and in the third case to Abū Jahl."

XV. In deference to style and word usage. Some scholars have mentioned the following verse as an example: "An tadilla iĥdāhumā fa tudhakkira iĥdāhumā 'l-ukhra" [460](2:282)

XVI. Where a pronoun which is absolutely necessary is assumed. An example is the verse: "atayā qaryat istaţ'amā ahlahā" [461](18:77) If instead, the words *istaţ`amāhā* were used it would not have been correct, because they had not requested food from the village. The same is true for *istaţ`amāhum* because the statement *istaţ`amā* is an attribute of *qaryat* which is indefinite, and not of *ahl*. Thus, it is essential to have a pronoun that would refer to it, and that was only possible by explicitly mentioning the overt noun. This is how 'l-Subukī explained this in his response to a question asked by 'l-Salāĥ 'l-Safdī when he said:

My Lord! Chief Justice at whose   Appearance the sun and the moon turn bashful
Whose hand, and whose pen on paper   When bestowing, flow like two oceans merging

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[457] "If God so wishes He can put a seal on your heart; but He effaces crookedness. . ."

[458] "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind"

[459] "He created man from congealed blood. . . He teaches man that which he knew not; Nay! but man is indeed reprobate."

[460] "That if one forgot then one of them would remind the other."

[461] "They came to the people of a town and sought food from the people."

And who, when issues are murky Illuminates them with an eternal luminescence
I saw the Book of God, the greatest Miracle the best of guides in both the worlds
Among its miracles is its economy of Words, filled with meaning
But in the Cave I saw a verse whose Thought has for long has consumed me
It is no more than ‘istaţ`amā ahluhā For which we find in *istaţ`amāhum* a parallel
What then is the wisdom, and surely There is, in putting the overt noun for the pronoun
Guide, as is your wont, my perplexity For when explaining it I lack the ability

Note

It is better to repeat the meaning of an overt noun than the actual word, as had been the case in the verse: “innā lā nudī`u ajr ‘l-musliĥīn” [462](7:171), and the verse: “Innā lā nudī`u ajr man aĥsana `amal” [463](18:30)

Also in this category is the verse: “mā yawadd alladhīna kafarū min ahl ‘l-kitāb wa lā ‘l-mushrikīn an yunazzala `alaikum min khair min rabbikum; wa Allāh yakhtass bi raĥmatihī man yashā’” [464](2:105) It is appropriate that the descent of good be linked to the Sustainer (*rabb*) and the word *Allāh* is repeated because singling out human beings as opposed to all others with the good is an aspect of divinity (*ulūhiyyat)* This is because the ambit of being sustainer is broader.

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[462] “We do not lose track of the rewards of those who enjoin the good.”

[463] “We do not lose track of the rewards of those who do good deeds.”

[464] “Those from among the People of the Book and the pagans who disbelieve like not that revelation come unto you in the form of good from your Lord; but God chooses those who are to receive His mercy.”

Also in this category is the verse: “‘l-ĥamd li Allāh alladhī khalaqa ‘l-samāwāt wa ‘l-ard. . .bi rabbihim ya`dilūn.” [465](6:1) And because of its separation, its recurrence in the second verse is better than in the first. And using the overt noun instead of the pronoun after a delay is also better lest the mind be preoccupied in determining the object of the pronoun, in which case the beginning of the statement would be lost. This is so with the verse: “wa tilka ĥujjatunā ātaynāhā Ibrāhīm `alā qaumihī” [466](6:82) which appears after the verse: “wa idh qāla Ibrāhīm li abīhi Azar.” [467](6:74)

14- Ighāl or Im`ān (Diligence or Scrutiny)

This is to complete a statement with a idea without which the statement itself will still be complete. Some scholars assert that this is a genre specific to poetry, but in rebuttal reference is made to the following verse in the Qur’an: “Yā Qaum! ittabi`ū ‘l-mursalīn; ittabi`ū man lā yas’alukum ajran wa hum muhtadūn” [468](36:21,29) The statement *wa hum muntadūn* is a case of *īghāl* because the meaning of the verse will be complete without it–after all, the Prophet (s) is undoubtedly a guide. But it contains a superfluous addition meant to encourage emulation of the messengers.

Ibn Abū ‘l-Isbi` includes the verse “wa lā tusmi`u ‘l-summ ‘l-du`ā idhā wallau mudbirīn” [469](27:80) in this category because the words *idhā wallau mudbirīn* is superfluous to the meaning of the verse. It stresses their inability to benefit. Words in the verse: “wa man aĥsanu min Allāh ĥukman li qaum yūqinūn” [470](5:55) are superfluous in praising the believers and alluding to the derogation of the Jews and to the fact that they are far removed from faith. In the verse: “innahū laĥaqq mithl mā annakum tanţiqūn” [471](51:23) the words *mithl mā. . .* are superfluous to the meaning and serve to stress this promise, and that its occurrence, of necessity, is known , and that no one doubts it.

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[465] “All praise is due to God who created the Heavens and the Earth. . .assign partners to their Lord.”

[466] “These are our arguments which We gave to Abraham against his people.”

[467] “And remember Abraham saying to his father, Azar”

[468] “O! My People! Follow these messengers! Follow those who seek no compensation from you; those who are indeed rightly guided.”

[469] “You will be unable to get the deaf to listen to the call, seeing that they turn and move away.”

[470] “And who is better than God to rule over a community that believes.”

15-The Supplement (‘l-Tadhyīl)

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[471] “This is the truth, just as is the fact that you can speak.”

This is to supplement one verse with another, with the second verse incorporating the meaning of the first in order to stress its wording or its sense. This serves to manifest its meaning to those who are unable o understand and to confirm it for those who do understand. Examples are: “dhālika jazaynāhum bi mā kafarū wa hal nujāzī illa ‘l-kafūr” [472](34:17); “wa qul jā’a ‘l-ĥaqq wa zahaqa ‘l-bāţil inna ‘l-bāţil kāna zahūqan” [473](17:81); wa mā ja`alnā li bashar min qablika ‘l-khuld; `a fa in māta fa hum ‘l-khālidūn” [474](21:34); “kullu nafs dhā’iqat ‘l-maut” [475](3:185); “wa yaum ‘l-qiyāmat yakfurūn bi shirkikum wa lā yunabbi’uka mithl khabīr” [476](35:14)

16-All Round Scrutiny (‘l-Tard wa ‘l-`Aks)

‘L-Tībī has said: “This is to use two statements, such that the wording in the first statement confirms the sense of the second and vice versa. This is the case in the verse: “li yasta’dhinakum alladhīna malakat aymānukum wa alladhīna yablughu ‘l-ĥulm minkum thalātha marrāt. . .laisa `alaikum wa lā `alaihim junāĥ ba`dahunna.” [477](24:58) The stated requirement of seeking permission before entry during the specified times confirms the understanding that it is not required that permission be sought outside these times. And vice versa. The same is true for the verse: “lā ya`sūn Allāh mā amarahum wa yaf`alūn mā yu’marūn” [478](66:6) This category has its parallel in the *ihtibāk* type of brevity.

17-Completion (‘l-Takmīl)

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[472] “That was the requital We gave them because they disbelieved; And thus do We requite only the disbelievers.”

[473] “And say: “The truth has come and falsehood is routed Falsehood is indeed destined to be routed

[474] “And We have not, prior to you, given eternal life to a human being; If you happen to die will they live eternally!”

[475] “Every soul must taste death.”

[476] “On the Day of Resurrection they will reject your partnership; and none can conform you as He who knows everything’

[477] “Let those whom your right hands possess and those who have not yet achieved puberty seek permission at three times of the day. . .beyond this there is no blame on you or on them.”

[478] ‘They flinch not from obeying the commands which they receive from Allah; and they do exactly as they are told.”

Also known as Precaution (*'l-Ihtirās)* it is to include in a statement that which would avert any suggestion that contradicts the object of the said statement. Thus, if the verse: "adhillat `alā 'l-mu'minīn a`izzat `alā 'l-kāfirīn"[479](5:54) was limited to the word *adhillat* it would have suggested that this compassion was because of his own weakness, Thus the word *'a`izzat* was used. Also if the verse: "a shiddā' `alā 'l-kuffār ruĥamā' baynahum" [480](48:29) was limited to *ashiddā'* it would have implied that this was because of their own harshness. Another example is the verse: "takhruju baydā' min ghair sū'" [481](27:12) and the verse:"lā yaĥţimannakum sulaimān wa junūduhū wa hum lā yash`urūn" [482](27:18) is precautionary lest the injustice be imputed to Solomon. Another example is: "fa tusībakum minhum ma`arrat bi ghair `ilm" [483](48:25)as well as: "qālū nashhadu innaka la rasūl Allāh wa Allāh ya`lamu innaka la rasūluhū wa Allāh yashhadu inna 'l-munāfiqīn la kādhibūn" [484](63:1) The middle phrase is precautionary lest the impression be created that it too is subject to falsification. In the work *`Arūs 'l-Afrāĥ* the question is raised: "What if all these statements are said to furnish new meanings, will they therefore, not be considered prolix?" We would say that they are indeed prolix in removing doubts found in the previous statements, even though they independently have their own meanings.

18-Supplementation ('l-Tatmīm)

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[479] "They will show leniency to the believers and firmness to the disbelievers."

[480] "They are harsh to the disbelievers, and compassionate among themselves."

[481] "It will appear white, but not because of some disability."

[482] "Lest Solomon and his troops crush unawares"

[483] "And you would have accrued a crime without knowing."

[484] "They said: "We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of God." And God knows full well that you are His Messenger, and God bears witness that the hypocrites are indeed, liars."

This is to include in a statement not likely to cause misunderstanding a auxiliary phrase that serves some purpose. This may be to provide emphasis, as is the case with the verse: “wa yuţ`imūna ‘l-ţa`ām `alā ĥubbihī” [485](76:8) where the words *`alā ĥubbihī* means “notwithstanding their own love, or desire for it”. In such a case feeding others is nobler and more rewarding. The same is true for the verse: “wa āta ‘l-māl `alā ĥubbihī” [486](2:177) And the phrase *wa huwa mu'min* in the verse: “wa man ya`mal min ‘l-sāliĥāt wa huwa mu’min fa lā yakhāf” [487](20:112) is a very eloquent supplement.

19-Elaboration (‘l-Istiqsā’)

This is when the speaker explains an idea such that, after detailing all inherent qualities of that idea, and including all its essential and incidental features he leaves the person who comes later, no room for comment. This is the case with the verse: “a yawaddu aĥadukum an takūn lahū jannat. . . ” [488](2:266) If the Almighty limited Himself to saying *jannat* only, it would have sufficed. But He went on to add: “min nakhīl wa a`nāb” because damage to these things are more devastating to the owner. He rounds of with the verse: “tajrī min taĥtihā” And after these two supplemental statements He finishes the description by saying: “Lahū fīhā min kull ‘l-thamarāt” [489](48:27) He thus describes all the attributes of the gardens to accentuate the loss that would be incurred in its destruction. Then, He describes its owner, “wa asābahū ‘l-kibar”, and exhaustively explains its meaning in a way that magnifies the calamity. This it does after describing old age, by way of the words: “wa lahū dhurriyyat”. He goes on to describe the off spring as being weak.

He then mentions by way of the words: “fa asābahā i`sār” the rapid destruction of the garden for no other reason but the said calamity. But He goes beyond this knowing that whirlwinds do not destroy with great swiftness, and says: “fīhi nār”. But He goes beyond this to state that the Fire did scorch because of the possibility that it may have been too weak. He thus avoids this by saying: “fa iĥtaraqat” that it was able to burn and was not extinguished by the river in the orchid and by the green vegetation. This then is of the finest, most comprehensive and most complete elaborations ever put in words.

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[485] “And they feed, for the love of God. . “

[486] And they give wealth, for the love of God. . .”

[487] “And whoever does good deeds, as a believer, need not fear. . .”

[488] “Would one among you like to have a garden. . .”

[489] “For him in it there is every kind of fruit.”

Ibn Abū ‘l-Isbi` has said: “The difference between elaboration (*istiqsā’)*, supplementation (*tatmīm)* and completion (*takmīl)* is that supplementation refers to the process of completing a meaning that is incomplete. Supplementation refers to the process of supplementing the attributes of a statement that is complete, and elaboration refers to the process of elaborating the direct, the incidental, the attributes and the objectives of a statement that is already complete. This is done to the extent that everything that comes to mind is included therein and there remains no room for criticism.

20-Parenthetical Statements (*‘l-I`tirād)*

Qudāma gave this section the name sudden transition (*iltifāt)*. And it is the usage of one or more statements related in meaning, but having no inflective relationship to the main sentence or sentences. The statement itself serves a purpose other than the removal of some incertitude. Thus, in the verse: “wa yaj`alūna li Allāh ‘l-banāt subĥānahū wa lahum mā yashtahūn” [490](16:57) the words *subĥānahū* are parenthetical, and they serve to absolve God Almighty from the charge of siring girls and to underscore the vileness of those who imputed this to Him. And in the verse: “la tadkhulunna ‘l-musjid ‘l-ĥarām in shā’ Allāh āminīn” [491](48:27) the statement of exception is used parenthetically for the sake of blessings.

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[490] “And they ascribe daughters to God, Glory be to Him! And for them is whatever they desire!”

[491] “You will certainly enter the sacred House–God willing–in peace.”

And in the verse: fa’tūhunna min ĥaithu amarakum Allāh inna Allāh yuĥibbu ‘l-tawwābīn wa yuĥibbbu ‘l-mutţahhirīn; nisā’ukum ĥarth lakum” [492](2:223) is a case of more parenthesis in more than one sentence. The phrase *nisā’ukum* is linked to *fa’tūhunna* as commentary, and all that falls in between is parenthetical, and it serves to encourage purity and to discourage anal sex. And the verse: “Yā ard ‘ibli`ī mā’aki. . . wa qīl bu`dan” [493](11:44) contains three parenthetical statements: “wa ghīd ‘l-mā’. . .wa qudiya ‘l-‘amr. . .wa istawat `ala ‘l-jūdī”[494] It is stated in the work *‘l-Aqsā ‘l-Qarīb*: “The point here is to show that this decree will occur without a doubt, between these two events. Mentioning this later would have created the impression that it would occur later. Being put in the middle makes manifest that it will not be delayed. There is also a parenthesis within a parenthesis in the case of the phrase *wa qudiya ‘l-‘amr* which appears between *wa ghīd* and *wa istawat*. This is because settling takes place only after the water has drained. And if the statements between the verses: “Wa li man khāfa maqām rabbihī jannatān” and “muttaki’īn `alā furush” [495](55:46-54) are considered circumstantial expressions then the count would be seven.

Another example of a parenthesis within a parenthesis is the verse: “Fa lā ‘uqsimu bi mawāqi` ‘l-nujūm; wa innahū la qasam lau ta`lamūn `azīm; innnahū la Qur’ān ‘l-karīm” [496](56:75-77) This is because the parenthesis *wa innahū la qasam* appears between the oath and its conclusion, while the parenthesis *lau ta`lamūn* appears between the oath and its attribute. This is to show respect to the object of the oath and to underscore His Glory and to indicate to them that He enjoys a loftiness of which they remain unaware. In the work *‘l-Tibyān* ‘l-Tībī said: its advent is like that which is unexpected much like that benefit which is unanticipated.

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[492] “Approach them as God has instructed; God loves those who seek forgiveness, and He loves those who purify themselves. Your women are a tilth unto you. . .”

[493] “O! Earth! Swallow up your water. . .And it was said: “Away with. . .”

[494] “. . .the water abated, the matter was resolved. . .and the ark rested on Mount Judi.”

[495] “And for those who fear standing in front of their lord there will be two Heavens. . .they will recline on carpets.”

[496] “Nay! I swear by the setting of the stars; and this is indeed an immense oath–if only you knew. And that is indeed a Qur’an, most noble.”

21-Justification (‘l-Ta`līl)

It serves to confirm and emphasize. The mind is better served accepting rules that are justified than those that are not. Most justifications in the Qur’ān are formulated as responses required by the previous statements. The particles of justification are: *lām, inna, anna, idh, bā’, kay, min,* and *la`alla.* Examples of these have appeared in the section dealing with particles.

Of the things requiring justification is the word *‘l-ĥikmat* as appearing in the verse: “ĥikmat bālighat”[497](54:5) The reason for creation has been mentioned in the following verses: “ja`ala lakum ‘l-‘ard firāsh wa ‘l-samā’ binā’”[498](2:22) and “ a lam naj`al ‘l-ard mihādann; wa ‘l-jibāl autādan”[499](78:6,7)

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[497] “. . .The pinnacle of wisdom”

[498] “Who made for you the earth a carpet, and the skies a canopy”

[499] “Have We not made the earth a vast expanse and the mountains as pegs.”

The Muqaddam and the Mu'akhkhar.

This, the first of two sections, deals with verses that remain ambiguous on face value. But knowing that they belong to the category known as ‘advancing and retarding’ *('l-taqdim and 'l-ta'khir*) brings clarity to them. Though some of the pious ancestors have made passing references to them, such verses in fact, ought to have been dealt with exclusively in a separate work. Ibn Abū Ḩātim thus quotes Qatāda with reference to the verse, "Wa lā tu`jibuka amwāluhum wa lā aulāduhum; innamā yurīdu Allahu li yu`adhdhibahum fi al-hayāt al-duniya."(9:85)[1] as saying: “This verse belongs to the genre of *taqdim*, and should be understood as follows: "*fa lā tu`jibuka amwāluhum wa la aulāduhum fi al-hayāt al-duniya; innamā yurīdu Allahu li yu`adhdhibahum biha fi al-`ākhira.*[2]

He also considers the verse, "*wa laulā kalimatun sabaqat min rabbika lakāna lizāman wa ajalun musamma*."[3] (129:20) as a case of *tadīm*. He reconstructs it thus: "*wa laula kalimatun sabaqat min rabbika wa ajalun musamma lakāna lizāma*."[4]

And he quotes Mujāhid with regard to the verse, "*anzala `alā `abdihī al-kitāb wa lam yaj`al lahū `iwaja qayyiman*..."[5] (1:18) as saying that it too, belongs to the category of *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr* and must be understood as: *anzala `alā `abdihī al-kitāb qayyiman wa lam yaj`al*

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[1] "Let not their wealth or their offspring enthrall you; God but wants to chastise them thereby in this worldly life."(55:9)

[2] "Let not the wealth and the offspring that they possess in *the life of this world* enthrall you; God but wants to chastise them thereby in the hereafter."

[3] "Now, but for a decree that had been issued by your Sustainer *and a term set (by Him)* (their punishment) would have occurred (instantly)."

[4] "Now, but for a decree that had already been issued it would have occurred (instantly)."

[5] "(He) sent down this divine scripture upon his servant without causing it to be crooked; (it is thus) unerringly straight."

lahū `iwaja.[6]

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[6] (He) it is Who revealed to his servant this divine scripture which is without errors and without crookedness.

And he quotes Qatāda as saying that the verse "*innī mutawaffīka wa rāfi`uka ilayya*,[7] (55:3) also belongs to the said category and must be understood thus: "*innī rāfi`uka ilayya wa mutawaffīka.*[8]

And he quotes `Ikrima as saying that the verse: "*lahum `adhābun shadīdun bimā nasū yaum al-hisāb,*[9] (26:38) also belongs to the said category, and must be understood thus: *Lahum yaum al-hisāb `adhābun shadīdun bimā nasū.*[10]

And Ibn Jarīr quotes Ibn Zayd as saying that the verse "wa laula fadl Allah `alaikum wa rahmatuhu la ittaba`tum al-shaitāna illā qalīlan"[11] (83:4) also belongs to the said category and must be interpreted as "*adhā`ū bihī illa qalīlan minhum; wa laulā fadl Allah `alaikum wa rahmatuhū lam yanju qalīlun wa la kathīr*"[12]

And he quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying that the verse: *Fa qālū arinā Allah jahratan."*[13] (153:4), also belongs to the said category. Even when they see God, in person, they still say loudly: '*Arinā Allah*!' Ibn Jarir adds that it was their question that was put loudly.

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[7] I will certainly cause you to die and raise you up to me (thereafter).

[8] I will certainly raise you up to me by causing you to die.

[9] For them is a grievous punishment for having forgotten the Day of Reckoning.

[10] For them, on the day of Reckoning, is a grievous punishment for having forgotten.

[11] And but for God's bounty and mercy upon you, all but a few among you would certainly have obeyed Satan.

[12] All but a few of (the weak in faith have a tendency) to circulate (secret matters of the community). And but for the bounty and the mercy of God upon you none among them whatsoever would be saved.

[13] They said, 'Show us God face to face!'

The same is true for the verse: "Wa idh qataltum nafsan fa iddāra'tum fīhā."[14][15] Baghawī argues that this particular verse, its actual location in recitation notwithstanding, is in fact, the opening statement of this parable. Al-Wāhidī maintains that though the controversy about the identity of the murderer is put at the end, it in fact occurred before the incident of the slaughter of the cow. This was because the audience, when told by God: “God commands you. . .” realized that the cow was being slaughtered only to pin-point the true killer who till then, had been hidden from them. When it was clear that they comprehended this, God went on to say: "Recall your having slain a man and having cast blame for this on each other. . .”(2:72) , and your having asked Moses for a solution, and being told: "God orders you to slaughter a cow."

Another example is the verse: “afa ra`ayta man ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu"[16] (23:45). If rearranged correctly (in terms of syntax) the verse would read "*hawāhu ilāhahu*", because one who takes his God as his object of desire can surely not be rebuked. In recognition of this interpretation, the second accusative in the verse (*ilāhahu*) was put in front.

And if the term *aĥwā* in the verse, "Akhraja al-mar`ā faja`alahū guthā`an ahwā"[17] (4:87) means green, it would serve as an attribute of the word *al-mar`a*, and together they would read: “He produces them green”. It is put at the end however, to maintain the meter.[18]

Similarly, the term *sūd* in the verse *"Gharābīb sūd"*[19] (27:35) would normally be placed in front, for *ghirbīb* means pitch black.

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[14] (O, Children of Israel) recall your having slain an (innocent) human being and having cast the blame of this crime upon each other.

[15] 'l-Hussain b. Mas`ud Baghawi, *Ma`Alim 'l-Tanzil* (Beirut: Dar 'l-Ma`rifa, 1985).

[16] Have you focused on oen who takes, as his deity, his own desires.

[17] He who brings forth lush verdure, causing it thereafter to turn to swarthy stubble.

[18] (He who) brings forth verdure that is lush, and thereafter, causes it to become swarthy stubble.

[19] (And mountains that are) raven-black. The point here is that the noun in this phrase, *sūd* would normally placed before its adjective, *gharābīb*.

As for the verse, "Fa daĥikat fa bashsharnāha "[20] (71:11) it should be understood as *"Fa bashsharnāha fa dahikat."[21]*

And only if the words "*hamma bihā*" in the verse "*Wa laqad hammat bihī wa hamma bihā laulā an r'ā burhān rabbihī*"(24:12) [22] are put at the end would Joseph be absolved of lustful intent.

The second category consists of verses where *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr* occur but with no apparent ambiguities. In his work *'l-Muqaddima Fī Sirr 'l-Fādl 'l-Muqaddima* Shams 'l-Dīn b. 'l-Sā'igh quotes the most popular view that such constructions serve to accentuate particular aspects of these verses. Similarly, Sībawayh in his work, says that, in broad terms, *taqdīm* occurs where aspects of a verse need special mention. He also indicated a desire to futher explain these aspects. This in general then, is the wisdom behind such constructions. As for their details, I have had made clear ten kinds of *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr* verses as they appear in the Qur'an. These are:

1. *'l-Tabarruk*: to gain blessings, by advancing, for example, the name of God Almighty in matters that are significant. An example is the verse, "Shahida Allah annahū lā ilāha illā huwa wa al-malā'ikatu wa 'ulu al-`ilmi."(18:3) [23] and the verse, "Wa i`lamū annamā ghanimtum min shay' fa anna li Allāhi khumsuhū wa li al-rasūl."(41:8)[24]

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[20] (And his wife) laughed, and We gave her glad tidings.

[21] We gave her glad tidings, and she laughed,

[22] And indeed she desired him, and he did her; (and he would have succumbed to her invitation) had he not witnessed evidence from his Lord.

[23] God Himself bears witness, as do the angels, as well as those endowed with knowledge, that there is no deity except Him.

[24] Know that whatever booty you acquire one-fifth thereof belongs to God and His apostle.

2.*Al-Ta`zīm*: to glorify, as in the following verses, "Wa man yuţi`i Allah wa al-rasūl"(13:4) [25]; "Inna Allah wa malā`ikatahu yusallūna `alā al-nabiyy." (56:33)[26], and, "Wa Allahu wa rasūluhū ahaqqu an yurďūhu."(62:9)[27]

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[25] And whosoever obeys God and His messenger . . .

[26] God, along with His angels are blessing the Prophet.

[27] Whilst it is God and His Prophet whose pleasure they ought to seek.

3.*Al-Tashrīf*: to honor, by putting the male before the female, in the verse: "Inna al-muslimīna wa al-muslimāti..."(35:33)[28]; or the freedman over the slave: "’l-ĥurr bi al-ĥurr wa al-`abd bi al-`abd wa al-'unthā bi al-'unthā.(178:2)[29], or the living over the dead: “yukhriju ‘l-ĥayya min ‘l-mayyit”(6:95)[30] and "Wa mā yastawī al-aĥyā' wa lā al-amwāt".(22:35)[31]; or horses over other animals: "Wa al-Khaila wa al-bighāla wa al-ĥamīra lī tarkabūhā".(8:16)[32]; or hearing over seeing: “wa `alā sam`ihim wa `alā absārihim”(2:7)[33], and "Inna al-sam`a wa al-basara wa al-fu'āda"(36:17)[34]and, “In akhadha Allāh sam`akum wa absārakum” (6:46) Ibn `Atiyya quotes Al-Naqqāsh as saying, that in light of the verse "*In akhadha Allahu sam`akum wa absārakum*", God would seem to favor hearing over seeing.(36:17)[35] It is for this reason that in describing Himself in the verse: “*samī’ ‘alīm*” hearing comes first. Other examples are: favoring Muhammad (s) over Noah (a.s.) and those with him as in the verse: "Wa idh akhadhnā min al-nabiyyīna mīthāqahum wa minka wa min Nūh"(7:33)[36]; favoring the apostles over the prophets in the verse: "Min rasūl wa lā nabiyyin"(52:22)[37]; favoring the *muhajirs* over the

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[28] Verily, the Muslim male and the Muslim female ...

[29] The free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the woman for the woman.

[30] “He extracts the living from the dead.”

[31] The living and the dead are certainly not equal.

[32] (And He has created) horses, mules and asses for you to ride.

[33] “And over their hearing, and over their seeing.”

[34] Verily, the hearing, the sight, and the heart will be called upon to account.

[35] (What if God) took away your hearing and your sight.!

[36] And remember that We did take a solemn pledge from the Prophets, and from you, and from Noah.

[37] (Whenever We despatched) any apostle or prophet. . .

ansār in the verse: "Wa al-sābiquna al-awwalūna min al-muhājirīna wa al-ansār"(100:9)[38]; and wherever mentioned in the Quran, favoring humans over the *jinn*. In the chapter on women, the Quran favors the Prophets, then those who confirmed the truth, then the martyrs, and then the righteous ones. It also favors Ishmael over Isaac because he is older, and because the Prophet Muhammad (s) is of his progeny. Although Moses appears generally before Aron--because of having spoken directly to God--in the chapter *Tāhā*, Aron is mentioned first in keeping with the meter. Also, Gabriel is mentioned before Michael because of his superiority. Generally human beings are mentioned before animals and inanimate objects as in the verse: "Matā`an lakum wa li an`āmikum"(32:80) [39] and: "Yusabbihu lahū man fi al-samāwāti wa al-ard wa al-tayr sāffāt"(41:24)[40]. But in the verse "Ta`kulu minhu an`āmuhum wa anfusuhum"(27:32)[41] animals are mentioned before humans because animal feed appears in the beginning of the verse. The same however, is not the case for the aforementioned verse 32:80: the word *lakum* therein is meant to conform to the prior verse "Fal yandhur al-insān ilā ta`āmihī"(25:80)[42] Also, believers are always mentioned before non-believers, the righteous (*ashāb al-yamīn*) before the wicked (*ashāb al-shimāl*), the skies before the earth, and the sun before the moon, except in the verse: "khalaqa sab`a samāwātin tibāqa wa ja`ala al-qamara fīhinna nuran wa ja`ala al-shamsa sirājā"(3:67)[43]. Some explain this as essential for the meter in the verse, and others that the inhabitants of the heavens–as alluded to by the pronoun in the verse (*fī hinna*)–benefit more from the moon than do earthlings. Ibn al-Anbārī explains that the face of the moon illuminates the sky dwellers, and its back, the earth dwellers. And because most of its light illuminates the sky dwellers, God Almighty used the words: *fīhinna*.

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[38] (God is pleased with) those first and foremost (of Muslims) from among the migrants (of Mecca as well as their) hosts (in Medina).

[39] A delight for you as well as for your animals.

[40] Everyone in heaven and on earth sing His praises, and so too the birds as they spread out their wings.

[41] (We do indeed...bring forth herbage) of which your animals partake and so do you.

[42] Let man then ponder the source of his food.

[43] (Have you not seen how God) created, in perfect synchrony, the seven heavens, and set up, therein, the moon as a light, and the sun as a radiant lamp.

Then, there is the unseen world which is generally mentioned before the seen, which in the case of the verse "`Alim al-ghayb wa ‘l-shahāda"(22:59)[44] is because knowledge of the unseen is more noble. But in deference to the meter in the chapter, this rule is not followed the verse : "Ya`lamu ‘l-sirra wa akhfā"(7:20)[45]

4:*Al-Munāsaba*: to maintain conformity. This may occur between the first mentioned item in a verse and its contents, as is the case in the verse : "Wa lakum fīhā jamālun hīna turīhūna wa hīna tasrahūn."(6:16)[46] Beauty admittedly, is beauty, regardless of whether it manifests itself in the morning or in the evening. Nonetheless, with regard to cattle, it would be in the evening, after they have eaten, that is, that their beauty would be most resplendent. In the mornings, before they have eaten, it is less so. In like vein is the verse: "wa alladhīna idhā anfaqū lam yusrifū wa lam yaqturū"(67:25) [47], where *yusrifū* is negated first because giving is itself a noble gesture. And in the verse, "Wa urīkum ‘l-barq khaufan wa ţama`an"(24:30)[48] fear comes before hope because initially, on seeing the first bolt of lightning, one is filled with fear, whereas the hope for rain occurs only after several such bolts have fallen.

In the verse "Wa ja`alnāhā wa ibnahā āyatan lil`ālamīn.(91:21)[49] she (Mary) comes before her son (Jesus) because the previous verse “Wa allatī aĥsanat farjahā” focuses largely on her. But in the verse "Wa ja`alnā ibn Maryama wa ummahū..."(50:23) the son comes first in order to conform with the previous verse where Moses comes first.

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[44] God knows all things, both hidden and open.

[45] (Behold! He knows) He knows all secrets, and (even that which is) more hidden

[46] (And He creates cattle); you find beauty in them in the evenings when you drive them home and in the mornings when you tale them out to pasture.

[47] And those who, whenever they spend, are neither wasteful nor miserly.

[48] (Among His wonders is that) He shows you His signs that fill you wit fear, but also with hope.

[49] And We caused her and her son to be a sign for all of humanity.

As for the verse "Wa kullan ātaynāhū ĥukman wa `ilman"(79:21)[50], sound judgement is mentioned therein before knowledge, although the latter generally precedes the former. This was done in order to maintain continuity with the previous verse which reads: "Idh yahkumāni fi al-harth."(78:21)[51] And *Munāsaba:* may also occur where there is a need to maintain conformity between the location of a word in a verse and its actual meaning. The following are examples hereof:

A.’l-awwalu wa al-ākhiru.(3:57)[52]
B.Wa laqad `alimnā al-mustaqdimīna minkum wa laqad `alimnā al-musta'khirīn.(24:15)[53]
C.Liman shā'a minkum an yataqaddama au yata'akhkhara.(3:74)[54]
D.Bimā qaddama wa akhkhara.(13:75)[55]
E.Thullatun min al-awwalīna wa thullatun min al-ākhirīn.(13:56)[56]
F.Li Allāhi al-'amru min qablu wa min ba`du.(4:30)[57]

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[50] And unto each of them we bestowed sound judgement and knowledge.

[51] (And remember) David and Soloman *who gave judgement* about a field (into which someone's cattle had strayed).

[52] (He is) the first and the last.

[53] And We do know well those who came before you as well as those who will follow you.

[54] (This is a warning) for those among you who come farward as well as those who tarry.

[55] (On that day man will be informed) of what he had done or had left undone.

[56] (The foremost in faith and good works) will comprise of many of those from the past and some from later times.

[57] God has all control, initially and ultimately.

G.Wa lahū ‘l-hamd fī 'ūlā wa ‘l-ākhīra.(70:28)[58]

In the verse "Fa li Allah ‘l-ākhiratu wa al-'ūlā".(25:53)[59] the word *al-ākhira* comes first to maintain the meter, just as is the case with the verse "Jama`nākum wa al-awwalīn"(38:77)[60]

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[58] To Him belongs all praise in the beginnning and in the end.

[59] (Unto God belongs) the hereafter as well as this life.

[60] When We will have gathered you and those before you.

5.*Al-Haththu*:to encourage and to motivate the performance of an act which is in danger of being neglected. Thus in the verse "Min ba`di wasiyyatin yūsī bihā au dain."(11:4)[61] bequests come first although the law requires that debts be discharged before bequests.

6.*Al-Sabaq*: to mention things in order of their existence. This may occur either in terms of time, as in the appearance of night before day, darkness before light, David before Soloman, the `Ad people before the Thamūd, Adam before Noah, Noah before Abraham, Abraham before Moses, Moses before Jesus, and David before Solomon. In the verse "Yastafī min al-malā`ikati rusulan wa min al-nās"(75:22)[62] angels are mentioned before human beings. Similarly, in the following verses wives, are mentioned before children: "Qul li azwājika wa banātika"(59:33)[63]; and in the following verse, slumber before sleep: "Lā ta'khdhuhū sinatun wa la naum.(225:2)[64]

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[61] (THe estate of the deceased should be distributed only) after the bequests (have been discharged) or debts (paid off)

[62] (God, in His majesty) appoints, as His messengers, angels as well as human beings.

[63] (O Prophet) tell your wives and your daughters. . .(to draw their outer garments over themselves.

[64] Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes Him.

Or they occur in terms of their revelation, as in the verses "Suhuf Ibrāhīm wa Mūsā"(18:87)[65] and "Wa anzala al-Taurāt wa al-Injīl min qablu hudan li al-nās wa anzala al-Furqān"(4:3)[66] Or in the order of their importance as in "Irka`ū wa 'usjudū"(77:22)[67]; "Fa igsilū wujūhakum wa aydiyakum"(6:5)[68], and "Inna al-Safa wa al-Marwata min sha`āir Allah"(158:2)[69]. It was thus, with regard to the latter, that the Prophet said "We begin (the walk between the two hills) in the order mentioned by God Himself."[70]

Things are also mentioned in their natural order as in the following two verses: "Mathna wa thulātha wa rubā`"(3:4)[71] and "Ma yakūnu min najwa thalatha illa huwa rābi`uhum wa lā khamsat illā huwa sādisuhum"(7:58)[72]. Numbers too, are mentioned in this order, except in the verse "An taqūmū li Allah mathna wa furādā`"(46:34) where, to emphasize the importance of unity and cooperation in the performance of good, that order is reversed.[73]

7.*Al-Sababiyya*: to show cause and effect. The word *al-`Azīz* for example, always appears before

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[65] Indeed all this has already been discussed in earlier revelations- in those of Abraham and Moses.

[66] In earlier times He had revealed the Torah and the the Gospels-(And He)now reveals the Standard (to determine truth from falsehood).

[67] (O You who believe) Bow down and prostrate yourselves (before God).

[68] (O You who believe) . . .wash your faces and your hands. . .

[69] (Indeed, the two hills)Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of God.

[70] This is part of a longer tradition as found in the *Saĥīĥ* collection of Ibn. Hajjaj 'l-Qushayri Muslim, (Riyadh: Idararat 'l-Buhuth 'l-`ilmiyya, 1991).

[71] (Then marry) two three or four (wives).

[72] There can be no conspiracy of three persons without Him being the fourth among them, nor of five without Him being the sixth. . .

[73] (God is with you) whether you be in company with another, or alone.

al-Hakīm because His wisdom is a consequence of His majesty. Similarly, the word *al-`Alīm* appears before *al-Hakīm* because fortitude and perfection are based on knowledge. This order is reversed in chapter six however, because of the need to clarify certain commands.[74]

In the verse "Yuhibbu al-tawwābīna wa yuhibbu al-mutatahhirīna" those who repent comes before those who purify themselves. This is because purification is a consequence of repentance.[75] In the verse "Li kulli affāk athīm" falsehood appears first because it is the cause of sin.[76] Similarly, in the verse "yaguddū min absārihim wa yahfazhū furūjahum" [77] men are first called upon to lower their gazes because eye contact may lead to sexual contact.

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[74] See in this regard 83:6, and 128:6.

[75] (God) loves those who seek His pardon and those who purify themselves.

[76] Woe unto every lying sinner.

[77] (Command all believing men) to restrain their gaze and to protect their chastity.

7-*Al-Kathra*: To show a greater number as in the verse "Fa minkum kāfir wa minkum Mu'min" [78], where disbelievers, because of their greater number, are mentioned first. Or in the verse "Fa minhum zālimun li nafsihi",(35:32)[79] where for the same reason, the unjust come first, followed by those who follow a middle course, and those foremost in good deeds. And because men are more likely to steal than women they come first in the verse dealing with theft, whereas women come first in the verse of adultery, because it is more prevalent among them. Similarly, in most places in the Qur'an, the mercy of God comes before His wrath because it is greater. This is substantiated by the tradition of the Prophet (s) "Indeed My mercy overwhelms My wrath."[80]

Ibn ʻl-Hājib, in his work *ʻl-Amāli* says, with regard to the verse "Inna min azwājikum wa aulādikum `aduwwan lakum fa ihdharūhum"(64:14) [81] that *azwājukum* is mentioned first to indicate that animosity takes place among them, and that it occurs more frequently among spouses than among children. It was also placed first because it best captured the intended meaning. Similarly, the word *amwāl* in the verse "Innama amwālukum wa aulādukum fitna"(64:15) comes first because wealth and calamity are almost inseparable. Thus the Quran says "Inna ʻl-insān layatgā an ra'āhu istaghna" (96:6)[82] And because the presence of children does not necessitate the occurrence of calamity in the same way that wealth does, the latter's mention first was thus appropriate.

9-*Al-Taraqqi:* to progress from the lowest to the highest as in the verse "'A lahum arjulun yamshūna bihā am lahum aidin yabtishūna bihā[83], which begins with the less noble hands to the more noble legs. Similarly, the eyes are more noble than the hands and hearing more noble than seeing.

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[78] (He indeed, created you, but) some among you deny the truth whilst others affirm it.

[79] (And among our servants are those) who are unjust to themselves.

[80] Muhammad b. Isma`il Ed. Muhammad Fu'ad `Abd Al-Baqi Bukhari, *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (Beirut: Dar Al-Basha'ir al-Islamiyya, 1988); Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*.

[81] Behold, some of your spouses and your children may turn out to be enemies of you.

[82] Man, indeed, does transgress greatly, when he believes that he is self-sufficient

[83] Do these (idols) have feet with which to walk, or hands with which to grasp?

Also in this category are verses in which words with greater meaning are given precedence, such as *ʼl-rahim* which precedes ‘*al-rahman*, and *ʼl-raʼūf* which precedes *ʼl-rahīm*. And, the word *ʼl-rasūl* precedes *ʼl-nabī* as is found in the verse "Wa kāna rasūlan nabīyyan"(19:51)[84] Many explanations have been suggested for this last sequence, the most widespread being that it conforms to the meter of the verse.

10. *al-Tadalli* to progress from the highest to the lowest. Examples of this have been furnished by of the following verses:

a- Lā ta'khudhuhū sinatun wa lā naum.(255:2)[85]

b- Lā yughādiru saghīratan wa lā kabīratan. (49:18)[86]

c- Lan yastankifa al-masīhu an yakūna `abdan li Allah wa lā al-malā'ikatu al-muqarrabūna. (172:4)[87]

This then is what was mentioned by Ibn ‘l-Sā’igh. Others have mentioned other reasons including:

d- Where the word brought forward is more expressive of ability and more amazing. An example is the verse: Wa minhum man yamshī `alā batanihī. (45:24)[88] and the verse: Wa sakhkharna ma`a Daūd al-jibāl yusabbihna wa al-tair. (79:21)[89] Zamakhshari maintains that mountains that are lifeless, take precedence over living, albeit mute, birds, because the former's submission to Him, and glorification of Him, is by far a greater miracle that provides more astonishing proof of

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[84] (Moses) was an apostle and a prophet.

[85] Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes Him.

[86] (What kind of book is this!) It leaves out nothing, big or small.

[87] Christ does not disdain being a slave unto God, nor do the angels closest to (Him)

[88] (Of the animals that God created) Some crawl on their bellies.

[89] And We subdued the hills, and so too th birds to (Sing our praises)

His omnipotence.[90][91]

Another reason for this sequence, of which many examples will follow presently, is the to maintain the meter of the verses. And finally, this sequence is sometimes used to present parenthetical statements that give qualifying information. More on this subject will appear in section 55.

Note:

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[90] v.2,p.580

[91] Mahmud b. `Umar Zamakhshari, *Al-Kashshaf `an Haqa'iq 'l-Tanzil* (Bulaq: Al-Matba`l-Amiriyya).

Just as some words may come first in some contexts they may come later in others. This may be because the context itself may so dictate, as was alluded to previously. Or to give special attention to them, some statements begin with, and end with the same words, as in verse, "Yauma tabyaddu wujūh wa taswaddu wujūh" (106:3)[92] Or to show eloquence a single word would assumes several positions as in "Wa 'udkhulū ‘l-bāb wa qūlū ĥiţţatun"(58:2)[93] and, "Wa qūlū hittatun wa 'udkhulū al-bāb sujjadan" (161:17).[94] This is also the case in the verses "Innā anzalnā al-Taurāt fīha hudan wa nūr"(44:5)[95] and "Qul man anzala ‘l-kitāb alladhī jā'a bihī Mūsa nūran wa hudan li ‘l-nās." (91:6)[96]

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[92] On the day when some faces will be whitened.”

[93] Enter the gate prostrating, and say "Forgive us our sins"

[94] And say "Forgive us our sins" and enter the gate humbly.”

[95] We indeed, revealed the Torah; in it is guidance and light.

[96] (O ye who believe) Who revealed the book that Moses brought as a source of guidance and a light for mankind? See in this regard: Khatīb Iskāfī, *Durrat 'l-Tanzil* (Beirut: Dar 'l-Afāq 'l-Jadīda, 1979)

On the Definitions of Particles that the Exegete must Know

By particles I refer to the letters and the like that are nouns, verbs and adverbs.

Know, that because of their differing occurrences, having knowledge of this material is an important necessity. It is because of such differing occurrences that speech takes on such variations. An example is the verse “wa innā au iyyākum la `alā hudan au fī ďalālin mubīn”[1] (34:24). The particle “`alā” is used for the truth and “fī”for misguidance, and it is as if the truthful person is highly placed, with vision that takes in various scenarios whereas the misguided person is submersed in darkness, is lowly placed, and not knowing where to turn.

Another is the verse “fa ib`athū aĥadakum bi wariqikum hāthihi ilā `l-madīnati fa lyanthur ayyuhā azkā ţa`āman fa lya’tikum bi rizqin minhu wa lyatalaţţaf”[2] (18:19) is conjoined to the previous sentence by way of the participle “fā’” and to the subsequent sentence by way of the participle “wāw”. And this is because the sequence has been disturbed. After all, watchfulness (*`l-talaţţuf*) is not contingent on food being brought, as opposed to its coming which is anticipated. Also anticipating the food is linked to turning attention to it, and turning attention to it is linked to abandoning disputes about the time spent in the cave, and deferring to the knowledge of God in this regard.

And the verse “innamā `l-śadaqāt li `l-fuqarā’i wa `l-masākīn. . .”[3] (9:60) shifts from the particle “li” to “fī”in the case of the last four persons, to imply a greater right of the offerings than those before them who were preceded by the particle “li”. This is because “fī” alludes to ‘containing something’ and its usage suggests that they have greater right to being considered for the offerings, just as a thing is placed in its container to remain therein.

`l-Fārisī has said: “The verse uses ‘wa fī `l-riqāb’ and not ‘wa lī `l-riqāb’ indicating that a slave lacks right of ownership.”

Ibn `Abbās is reported to have said: “Praise be to God who said: “`an śalātihim sāhūn”[4] (107:5) and did not say “fī salātihim”. Similar examples will be mentioned.

And in presenting this material he followed the sequence of the letters of the alphabet. A group of scholars dedicated separate works to this topic. This includes `l-Harawī from among the early scholars, who did so in the work *`l-Uzhīyyah* , and Ibn Umm Qāsim from among the later scholars who did so in the work *`l-jana `l-dānī.*

The Hamzah

This is of two kinds:

A- The interrogative particle (*hamzah` l-Istifhām*) which in reality seeks comprehension. and which is its original purpose. It is thus characterized by the following features:

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[1] “And verily , (either) we or you are rightly guided or in plain error”

[2] “So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town, and let him find out which is the good lawful food and bring some of that to you and let him be careful”

[3] “Zakāt are only for the poor, needy, those employed to collect funds, ...”

[4] “Those who delay (absent-minded) their *salāt”*

1. To omit, as will be explained in section 56.
2. To establish form and to confirm, as opposed to the particle *hal* which is used strictly to confirm, and all other particles which are used strictly to form.
3. To affirm, as in the verse “a kāna li `l-nās `ajaban”[5] (10:2) and the verse “ā `l-thakarairani ĥarrama. . .”[6] (6:143) and deny, as in “A lam nashraĥ”[7] (94:1). It serves to provide two meanings: one, to remind and alert, as in the foregoing examples, and as in the verse “a lam tara ilā rabbika kayfa madda `l-źill”[8] (25:45). And two, to show amazement at some colossal event, as in the verse “a lam tara ilā allathīna kharajū min diyārihim wa hum ulūf ĥathara `l-maut”[9] (2:243). In both cases the purpose is to alert, as in the verse “a lam nuhliki `l-auwwalīn”[10] (77:16).

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[5] “Is it a wonder for mankind that We sent..............”

[6] “Has he forbidden the two males”

[7] “Have We not opened your breast for you”

[8] “Have you not seen how your Lord spread the shadow”

[9] “Did you not think of those who went forth from their homes in thousands fearing death”

[10] “Did we not destroy the ancients?”

4. To show its connection to the previous verses it is placed in front of the conjunction. Examples include: “a wa kullamā `āhadū `ahdan”[11] (2:100); “a fa amina ahlu `l-Qurā”[12] (7:98), and the verse “a thumma ithā mā waqa`a”[13] (10:51). All by way of analogy with the parts of all conjoined sentences its related particles however. Examples include: “fa kaifa tattaqūn”[14] (73:17); “fa aina tathhabūn”[15] (81:26), “fa annā tu’fakūn”[16] (6:95); “fa hal yuhlaku”[17] (46:35), “fa ayyu `l-farīqaini”[18] (6:81), and the verse “fa mā lakum fī `l-munāfiqīn”[19] (4:88).
5. Abū Hayyān quotes some scholars as saying that it is not used as an interrogative particle until it is intuitively sensed that the response to the question would be in the affirmative. By contrast, *hal* conjures neither a positive nor a negative response.
6. As opposed to other particles it may also be part of a conditional statement. such as the verse: “a fa in mitta fahum khālidūn”[20] (21:34) and the verse “a fa in māta au qutila inqalabtum”[21] (3:144).
7. It does not serve literally to interrogate but to produce multiple meanings as will be clear in section fifty seven.

Note

When used in a sentence containing the verb *ra’ayta*, it precludes the literal meaning of seeing with the eye or the heart. Instead, it is then said to mean: “inform me” and when changed to the ???pronoun “hā”. Excluded from this is Qunbul’s recitation of the verse “hā antum hā’ulā”[22] (3:119) with a shortened *hā’.* It does however, appear in oaths, including the verse “wa lā taktum shahādatan”, which is read with *tanwīn*, followed by a lengthening of the *hamza* of the word “Allāh”.

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[11] “Is it not (the case)that every time they make a covenant”

[12] “Or, did the people of the towns then feel secure”

[13] “Is it then that when it has actually befallen, you will believe it?”

[14] “Then, how can you avoid the punishment”

[15] “Then, where are you going?”

[16] “Then, how are you deluded away from the truth?”

[17] “But shall any be destroyed except ....”

[18] “So which of the two parties. . .”

[19] “Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into two parties about the hypocrites?”

[20] “Then if you die, would they live forever?”

[21] “If he dies or is killed , will you then turn back on your heels as (disbelievers)?”

[22] “Lo! You are the ones . . .”

B-The *hamzah* that is used as vocative particle for objects close by. To this category according to `l-Farā’ belongs the verse “a man huwa qānitun ānā’a `l-layl”[23] when recited without a doubled *mīm*. So read, it means O! You who possess these attributes!

Hishām has “This is far fetched because of the fact that the vocative forms of the Qur’ān appear only with the particle “yā”. Shielding it from assertions that it is metaphorical does however, make Farrā’s opinion plausible. After all, none of the interrogatives used by God are done so literally. It is similarly shielded from assertions that much has been elided. Those who argue in support of the interrogative particle reconfigure the verse to mean: “a man huwa qānit khair am hādha ‘l-kāfir”[24] referring that is, to the object of the following verse: “qul tamatta` bi kufrika qalīlan”[25] (39:8), Thus, two things have been deleted: the equivalent of the *hamzah* and the predicate.

Aĥad

In the work *`l-Zīnat* Abū Ĥātim said: “This is a designation more complete than the word “*`l-wāĥid*”. Notice that the statement: *fulān lā yaqūm lahū wāĥid* (As for so and so: one person does not stand for him!) Holds out the possibility that two or more persons do indeed stand for him. This is different to saying: *“lā yaqūm lahū aĥad”* (No one stands for him)

The word “*`l-aĥad*” encompasses characteristics not found in “`l-wāĥid”. Thus the statement: “*laisa fī `l-dār wāĥid”* does not preclude animals, birds, wild animals and human beings; it thus includes human beings and others, as opposed to the statement: “*laisa fī `l-dār aĥad”* which is specific to human beings and excludes all others.

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[23] “Is one who is obedient to God prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night”

[24] “Is one who is obedient to God better or the disbeliever”

[25] “Say: “Exult in your disbelief for temporarily.”

He also said: “The word *`l-aĥad* in the idiom of the Arabs refers to ‘the first ‘ as well as “the one’”, and serves to both affirm and negate. Thus in the verse: “qul huwa Allāh āĥad”[26] (112:1) it means *wāĥid*, whilst in the verse “fa ib`athū aĥadakum bi wariqikum”[27] (18:19), it means *’l-awwal*. When used in the converse however it serves to negate only. One thus says: “*mā jā’anī min aĥad*” To this belongs the following verses: “a yaĥsabu an lan yaqdira `alaihi aĥad”[28] (90:5); “an lam yarahu aĥad”[29] (90:7); “fa mā minkum min aĥadin”[30] (69:47); and the verse “wa lā tuśalli `alā aĥadin”[31] (9:84). The word “wāĥid” however, is used without restrictions in both cases.

In using “*aĥad*” both the masculine and feminine forms are equally appropriate. The Almighty has said: “lastunna ka aĥadin min `l-nisā’i”[32] (33:32). This is in contrast to “*`l-wāĥid*”: one will not say: “ka wāhid min `l-nisā’i” but rather, “wāĥidah”. Furthermore, “*aĥad*” may be used for both singular as well as plural.

I would add that it is precisely for this reason that the verse “fa mā minkum min aĥadin `anhu hājizīn” does not use “`l-wāĥid”.

Also, `l-aĥad” does have a plural form, “`l-aĥadūn” and “`l-āĥād”, as opposed to “`l-wāhid” which has no plural. One does not say “wāhidūna” but “ithnān” and “thalātha” instead. And `l-aĥad” may not be used in multiplication, numbers, division and in counting generally, as opposed to “`l-wāĥid”. This brief discussion now ends. But his discussion on these two things yields seven sub sections.

And in ‘l-Bārizī’s *Asrār `l-Tanzīl* the following appears in a discussion of the chapter *`l-ikhlās*: It may well be asked that in the idiom of the Arabs ‘`l-aĥad’ commonly follows a negation whilst ‘`l-wāĥid’ follows an affirmation, whereas here *aĥad* appears after an affirmation?

Abū `Ubayd is of the view that they both mean the same, in which case none will hold any advantage over the other, even though ‘aĥad’ is used more frequently in the negative context. It may well be that this digression from the norm is in deference to the rhyme???

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[26] “Say: “He is God, the One”

[27] “So send one of you with this silver coin of yours”

[28] “Does he think that none can overcome him?”

[29] “Does he think that none sees him?”

[30] “And none of you could have withheld Us from (punishing) him”

[31] “And never pray (funeral prayer) for any of them(hypocrites)”

[32] “You are not like any other women”

And in his *Mufradāt `l-Qur'ān* `l-Rāghib had this to say: "*aĥad* is used in two ways, to negate, and to affirm." In the first case the object is to include the entire category of speakers, thus including many or a few. It is therefore quite correct to say : "mā min aĥadin min fāďilīn"[33]. Or as the verse goes: "fa mā minkum min aĥadin `anhu ĥājizīn". The second case takes three forms.

I. That which is used in numbers with the tens e.g *aĥada `ashara* (eleven) and *aĥadin wa `ishrīn* (twenty one).

II. That which is part of an *iďāfah* construction, and means the first. An example is the verse "ammā aĥadu kumā fa yasqī rabbahu khamran"[34] (12:41)

III. That which is used as an adjective to describe God in particular, as is the case with the verse "qul huwa Allāhu aĥad"[35] (112:1). The origin of the word is "*waĥada*" except that the word "*wahada*" is used for others.

Ith

This assumes the following forms:

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[33] "There is not any virtues people"

[34] "As for one of you, he (as a servant) will pour out wine"

[35] "Say: "He is God, the One"

1-As a noun in most cases for the perfect tense. Most scholars maintain however, that it only appears as an adverb, as in the verse “fa qad naśarahu Allāh ith akhrajahu allathīna kafarū”[36] (9:40). Or with the adverb as part of an iďāfa construction, as in: “ith hadaitanā”[37] (3:8); “yauma’ithin tuĥaddithu”[38] (99:4), and “wa antum ĥīna’ithin tanźurūn”[39] (56:84). Other maintain that it appears as the direct object, as in the verse “wa uthkurū ith kuntum qalīlan”[40] (7:86)”, and as in the opening statements of all parables, where it means ‘recall’. Or as the substitution (*badl minhu*) as in the verse “wa uthkur fī `l-kitāb Maryam ith intabathat”[41] (19:16). Here “ith” is an exhaustive substitution (*badl ishtimāl*). Also belonging to this category is the verse “yas’alūnaka `an `l-shahr `l-ĥarām qitālin fīhi”[42] (2:217) and uthkurū ni`mat Allāh `alaikum ith ja`ala fīkum anbiyā’a”[43] (5:20) which implies: remember those favors, that is, the cited installing of the prophets. So stated, the particle will be considered is the thing mentioned , therefore it is *badl kul min kul* (substituting the entire thing). Most scholars however, consider this an adverb for the direct object omitted in the first verse, that is: remember the favour of God when you were few. In the second verse they consider it an adverb of a word which is *muďāf* to a deleted direct object i.e. remember the story of Mary. This is supported by the verse “wa uthkurū ni`mata Allāh `alaikum ith kuntum a`dā’a”[44] (3:103). `l-Zamakhsharī asserts that it should be a *mubtadā’* (subject) and he cites the alternate reading of some of the verse “lamin manna Allāh `ala `l-mu’minīn”[45] (3:164). He said: “Reconfigured, the verse implies: *mannuhū idh ba`atha* (His bounty appeared when He dispatched) In this case *idhā* is in the nominative case, just as it is in the statement: *akhtubu mā yakūn `l-amīr idhā kāna qā’iman* (the leader is at his best when he delivers his address standing) i.e. when God sent him, then He favoured the believers”. Ibn Hishām said: “we do not know of anyone with this view”. Many scholars say that it serves to convert the perfect to the imperfect, as in the verse: “yauma’ithin tuĥaddithu akhbārahā”[46] (99:4), but the majority reject this view and designate this as belonging to those verses whose future events are so definitive as to be couched in past terms. To this category belongs the verse:“wa nufikha fī `l-śūr”[47] (18:99) as well.  Those holding this view, Ibn Mālik among them, support their view by way of the verse “fa saufa ya`lamūn; ith `l-aghlāl fī a`nāqihim”[48] (40: 70 - 71) This is because *ya`lamūn* due to it being prefixed by the particle *saufa* becomes imperfect in both word and meaning.  due to the participle of *`l-tanfīs* (soufa) which enters upon it and influence the word “ith”, therefore it get the status of “ithā”. Others consider it a circumstantial phrase (*ĥāl*), as appears in the verse “wa lā ta`malūn min `amalin illā kunnā `alaikum shuhūdan ith tufīďūna fīhi”[49] (10:61)

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[36] “For God did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out”

[37] “After you have guided us”

[38] “That day it will declare its information”

[39] “And you at the moment are looking on”

[40] “And remember when you were but few”

[41] “And mentioned in the Book (the Qur’ān), the story of Mary, when she withdrew in seclusion from her family”

[42] “They ask you about fighting in the sacred months”

[43] “Remember the favour of God unto you when He made appointed apostles from among you”

[44] “And remember God’s favour on you, for you were enemies”

[45] “God has indeed, conferred a great favour on the believers”

[46] “That day it will declare its information”

Note

Ibn Abū Ĥātim quotes Abū Mālik on the authority of `l-Suddī as saying: “wherever *in* appears in the Qur’ān nothing takes place, and wherever *ith* appears things do take place.

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[47] “And the trumpet will be blown”

[48] “They will come to know when iron collars will be rounded over their necks”

[49] “Nor you do any deed but We are witness thereof when you are doing it”

2. As a causative explanation (*`l-ta`līl*), as appears in the verse "wa lan yanfa`akum `l-yaum ith źalamtum annakum fī `l-`athāb mushtarikūn"[50] (43:39) to imply: that you share this day, the burden of punishment benefits you not, and this because of wrong doing in this world. Given that causative explanations stem from the intensity of the statement rather than the word as such, should this be considered a particle acting in place of the *lām* of causation, or an adverb of time? Two views exist in this regard, the first of which is attributed to Sībawaih. The second is critical of these explanations: for one, *ith* cannot be a substitute (*badl*)for *yaum* given the difference in time, and cannot be an adverb *yanfa`u* because it cannot affect both adverbs. Nor can it afect *mushtarikūn* because the governed word of the predicate of the "inna" rule cannot precede it, and because the governed word of a relative clause cannot precede the relative pronoun. Another reason is that they share in matters pertaining to the Hereafter, and not to the period of their wrongdoing.

Also considered causative are the particles in: "wa ith lam yahtadū bihi fa sa yaqūlūna hāthā ifkun qadīm"[51] (46:11) and "wa ith i`taźaltumūhum wamā ya`budūna illā Allāh fa'wū ilā `l-kahf"[52] (18:16). Most scholars reject this distinction, and say that it implies: *ba`da ith źalamtum*.

Ibn Jinnī has said: "I screened the verse "wa lan yanfa`akum `l-yaum. . ." repeatedly with Abū `Alī, probing the change of *ith* from *`l-yaum*. We concluded therefrom that in the case of God this life and the after life are one, and so today is like the past.

3. Abu `Ubaidah, following by Ibn Qutaibah, cites the verse "wa ith qāla rabbuka li `l-malā'ikah"[53] (2:30) to support the view that it is an addition which serves to emphasize.

4. Like the particle *qad* it too is used to clarify. The verse in question is ascribed thereto. To this category Suhaylī adds the verse "ba`da ith antum muslimūn"[54] (3:80) Ibn Hishām however, said : "these two views are irrelevant".

Issue

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[50] "It will profit you not this Day as you did wrong, (and) that you will be sharers in the punishment"

[51] "And when they have not let themselves be guided by it, they say : "this is an ancient lie"

[52] "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except God, then seek refuge in the cave"

[53] "And remember when your Lord said to the angels"

[54] "After you have submitted to God's will"

The particle “ith” must be attached to sentence that is either nominal as in the verse “wa uthkurū ith antum qalīl”[55] (8:26), or verbal. In the latter case the verb in question must be perfect in tense and meaning. An example is the verse: “Wa ith qāla rabbuka li malā’ikah” and the verse “wa ithi ibtalā Ibrāhīm rabbahu”[56] (2:124). It may also be perfect in meaning alone, as in the verse: “wa ith taqūla li allathī an`ama Allāh `alaihi”[57] (33:37). All three scenarios are expressed in the verse “illā tanśurūhu faqad naśarahu Allāh ith akhrajahu allathīna kafarū thāniya ithnain ith humā fī `l-ghār ith yaqūlu li śāĥibihi”[58] (9:40). Sometimes the sentence itself is omitted because of being well known, and in its stead a nunation is substituted, and because of the merger of two paused letter (*iltiqā’ al-sākinain*) the letter “thāl” is given a *kasra*. Examples are the verse “wa yauma’ithin yafraĥu `l-mu’minūn”[59] (30:4) and: “wa antum ĥīna’ithin tanźurūn”[60] (56:84).

`l-Akhfash opined that *ith* is declinable because it no longer needs the sentence, and that the *kasra* acts as end marker, in conjunction with the words “`l-yaum” and “`l-ĥīn” which are attached as *iďāfa* to it. This is rejected because its indeclension is because it comprises of two letters, and that the need for the sentence remains remains in order to complete its meaning. This is similar to that demonstative construction wherein the demonstrative particle has been omitted.

Ithā

It is of two kinds:

1. One, which serves to surprise, especially in the case of nominal sentences, which need no reply, nor need appear in the beginning. The meaning is conveyed in the present tense, and not in the future. Examples include: “fa alqāhā fa ithā hiya ĥayyatun tas`ā”[61] (20:20); “fa lammā anjāhum ithā hum yabghūn”[62] (10:23); and “wa ithā athaqnā `l-nās raĥmatan min ba`di dharrā’a massathum ithā lahum makrun fī āyātinā”[63] (10:21)

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[55] “And remember when you were few”

[56] “And remember when the Lord of Abraham tried him with certain commands”

[57] “And remember when you said to him on whom God has bestowed grace”

[58] “If you help him not, for God did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of the two”

[59] “And on that day, the believers will rejoice”

[60] “And you at that moment are looking on”

[61] “He cast it down, and behold! It was a snake, moving quickly”

[62] “But when He delivers them, behold! They disobey God”

[63] “And when We let mankind taste mercy after some adversity has afflicted them, behold! they take to plotting against Our *āyahs”*

Ibn Ĥājib has said : "By surprise is meant the simultaneous appearance of a thing together with you, in some activity". In saying, for instance, *kharajtu fa idha 'l-asad bi 'l-bāb* (I stepped out, and Lo! There was the lion at the door!) the lion and your appearance at the place of emergence are simultaneous. Its emergence with you at the place of emergence establishes greater proximity than if it had been the time of emergence. This is because it is place and not time that singles you out. And the greater the proximity the greater the surprise. Conflicting views exist with regard to this particle "ithā": that it is a participle, according to `l-Akhfash whose view Ibn Mālik gives preference to; that it is an adverb of place, according to `l-Mubarrad whose view Ibn `Uśfūr give preference to; and that it is an adverb of time, according to `l-Zujāz, whose view Zamakhsharī give preference to. He also claimed that it is governed by an implied verb derived from the word `l-mufāja'ah. He said: "The implication is as follows: "then when he came to call you, behold! you went out at that time". Ibn Hishām said: "this is not known from anyone else. Rather, it is the explicit or the implied predicate which is known to them as its accusative?? He said: "The predicate appearing with it in the Qur'an is always explicit."

2. That it does not come for *`l-mufāja'ah*. In most cases it comes as an adverb for the future tense which include the meaning of *sharţ* (condition). It specially enters upon verbal sentences and is in need of a *jawāb* (reply to sharţ). It occurs in the beginning, unlike *`l-mufāja'ah* and the verb that follows it, is either visible e.g. the verse "ithā jā'a naśr Allāh"[64] (110:1); or implied e.g. the verse "ithā `l-samā'u inshaqqat"[65] (84:1). Its *jawāb* is either a verb e.g. the verse "fa ithā jā'a amr Allāh qudhiya bi `l-Ĥaqq"[66] (40:78) or a nominal sentence joined to the participle "fā" e.g. "Fa ithā nuqira fī `l-nāqūr fa thālika youma'ithin youmun `asīr"[67] (74: 8-9) and the verse "fa ithā nufikha fī `l-śūr fa lā ansāba"[68] (23:101); or likewise a verbal sentence of request e.g. the verse "fa sabbiĥ bi ĥamdi rabbika"[69](110:3); or a nominal sentence joined to the participle "ithā- *`l-fujā'iyyah*" e.g the verse ithā da`ākum da'watan min `l-`ardh ithā antum takhrujūn"[70] (30:25) and the verse "fa ithā aśāba bihi man yashā'u min `ibādihi ithā hum yastabshirūn"[71] (30:48).

Sometimes it is implied due to an indication that precedes it, or an indication of *`l-maqām*

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[64] "When there comes the help of God"

[65] "When the heaven is split asunder"

[66] "But, when comes the commandment of God, the matter will be decided with truth"

[67] "Then, when the trumpet is sounded, truly, that Day will be a Hard Day"

[68] "Then, when the trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them"

[69] "So glorify the praises of your Lord"

[70] "When He will call you by a single call, behold, you will come out from the earth"

[71] "Then when He has made them fall on whom of His slaves as He wills, lo, they rejoice"

(status). It will be explained in the categories of *`l-hathf*.

Sometimes the participle “ithā” is excluded from being an adverb. `l-Akhfash said regarding the verse “ĥattā ithā jā’ūhā”[72] (39:71) that the participle “ithā” is in the accusative case because of the word “ĥattā”. Ibn Jinnīy said regarding the verse “ithā waqa`at `l-wāqi`ah.......”[73] (56:1) concerning the accusative case of the verse “khāfidhatan rāfi`atan”[74] (56:3). The first “ithā” is a *mubtada’a* (subject) and the second one is a predicate and the two accusative words are *ĥāl* (condition). Likewise the sentence of *laysa* and its effect. The meaning is “when the Event befalls, bringing low a group and exalting others”. That is the time when the earth will be shaken. The majority of scholars reject that is excluded from being an adverb and they say regarding the first verse “ verily, the word “ĥattā” is a participle of initiation, entering completely on the sentence but do not effect it In the second verse the second “ithā” is a *badl* of the first and the first one is an adverb and its *jawāb* deleted due to the understanding of the meaning. The lengthy wording and its implied words after the second “ithā” i.e. “you are divided and you were in three groups , beautify it.

Sometimes it is exclude from the future tense , then it occurs as *ĥāl* e.g. the verse “wa `l-layl ithā yaghshā”[75] (92:1). Verily, darkness is attached to the night, and the verse “wa `l-nahār ithā tajallā”[76] , and the verse “wa `l-najm ithā hawā”[77] (53:1).

Sometimes it occurs as perfect tense e.g. the verse “wa ithā ra’ou tijāratan ouw lahwan ......”[78] (62:11), because the verse was revealed after seeing it and dispersing from it. Likewise the verse “wa lā `alā allathīna ithā mā atouka li taĥmilahum qultu lā ajidu mā aĥmiukum `alayhi”[79] (9:92); and the verse “ĥattā ithā balagha maţla`a `l-shams”[80] (18:90) and the verse “ĥattā ithā sāwā bayna `l-śadafayn”[81] (18:96)

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[72] “Till when they reached it”

[73] “When the Event befalls”

[74] “Bringing low (some) and exalting others”

[75] “By the night as it envelopes”

[76] “By the day as it appears in brightness”

[77] “By the star when it goes down”

[78] “And when they see some merchandise or some amusement ......”

[79] “Nor (is there blame)on those who came to you to be provided with mounts, when you said: “I can find no mounts for you”

[80] “Until, when he came to the rising place of the sun”

[81] “Then, when he had filled up the gap between the two mountains”

Sometimes it is excluded from being a *sharţ* (condition) e.g the verse “wa ithā mā ghadibū hum yaghfirūn”[82] (42:37) and the verse “wa allathīna ithā aśābahum `l-baghyu hum yantaśirūn”[83] (42:39). The particle “ithā” in the two verses is an adverb for the predicate of the subject, which follows it. If it was a *sharţ* (condition) and the nominal sentence was its reply, it would have been connected to a letter *fā*. Others say : “it is assumed to be like that”. Therefore it is rejected because it cannot be deleted unnecessary. Another view is that the pronoun is for emphasising the *mubtada'a* (subject) and that which follows, is the reply. This is inaccurate. Another view is that its reply is deleted which is indicated by the sentence that follows it. This is difficult for no necessity at all.

Notes

1. According to the experts, that which is in the accusative case of the particle “ithā”, is its *sharţ*. The majority are of the view that it is the reply of a verb or something similar to it.

2. Sometimes the particle “ithā” has been used for continuity of the past, present and the future tenses like how the imperfect verb has been used for that e.g. the verse “wa ithā laqū allathīna āmanū qālū āmannā wa ithā khalou ilā shayāţīnihim qālūinnā ma`akum innamā naĥnu mustahzi’ūn”[84] (2:14) i.e. this is their condition at all times. Likewise the verse “wa ithā qāmū ilā `l-śalāti qāmū kusālā”[85] (4:142)

3. Ibn Hishām mentioned in the work *`l-mughnī* the paticle “ith mā” but not the particle “ithā mā”. Shaykh Bahā’u `l-Dīn mentioned it in the work *`urūs `l-afrāĥ* under the category of *adawāt `l-sharţ* (particles of condition). As for the particle “ith mā”, it does not appear in the Qur’ān. The view of Saybawīh is that it is a particle. `l-Mubarrid and others said: “it is still an adverb. As for the particle “ithā mā”, it appears in the Qur’ān in the verse “wa ithā ghadhibū”[86] (42:37), the verse “ithā mā atouka li taĥmila hum”[87] (9:92). I did not see anyone who objected against it remaining to be an adverb or changed to a particle. It is possible that there are two view in regard to the particle “ith mā”. It is possible that it may be with a *sukūn* in spite of remaining to be an adverb because it is more improbable in *tarkīb* (construction) than the particle “ith mā”

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[82] “And when they are angry, they forgive”

[83] “And those who, when an oppressive wrong is done to them, take revenge”

[84] “And when they meet those who believe, they say: “We believe,” but when they are alone with their *Shayāţīn* (devils) they say: “truly, we are with you; verily, we were but mocking”

[85] “And when they stand up for prayer, they stand with laziness”

[86] “And when they are angry”

[87] “Nor (is there blame) on those who came to you to be provided with mounts”

4. The particle “ithā” is specially used on something that is confirmed, assumed and that occurs a lot unlike the particle “in” which is used for doubtful things and imaginary rare things. Therefore God says in the verse “ithā qumtum ilā `l-solāt fa ighsilū” then He said “wa in kuntum junuban fa iţţaharū”[88] (5:6). The particle “ithā” is brought in ablution for its frequent occurrence and its multiple causes but the particle “in” is used in *janābah* for its rare occurrence in relation to the impure state. God says in the verse “fa ithā jā`athum `l-ĥasanah qālū lanā hāthihi wa in tuśibhum sayyi’atun yaţţayyarū”[89] (7:131) and the verse “wa ithā athaqnā `l-nās raĥmatan fariĥū bihā wa in tuśibhum sayyi’atun bimā qaddamat aydīhimithā hum yaqnaţūn”[90] (30:36). The particle “ithā was brought for something good because the bounties of God which he bestows on his slaves, are many and a decreed matter. The particle “in” was brought for evil because it seldom occurs and is doubtful.

Two verses contradict this rule viz. the first, the verse “wa la in mittum”[91] (3:158) and the verse “a fa in māta”[92] (3:144). The particle “in” is brought in spite of death being a certainty.
The other is the verse “ wa ithā massa `l-nās dhurrun da`ou rabbahum munībīna ilayhi thumma ithā athāqahum raĥmatan ithā farīqun minhum bi rabbihim yushriūn”[93] (30:33). So the particle “ithā” is brought at both sides. `l-Zamakhsharīy replied to the first by saying that because the time of death is unknown, it is considered to be something that is undecided. `l-Sakkākīy replied to the second by saying that it intends reprimand and scolding. So it brought the particle “ithā”as a means of instilling fear in them and informing them that they certainty taste some punishment. The meaning of some is derived from the word “`l-mass” and the indefiniteness of the word “dhurr”.

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[88] “When you intend to offer prayers then wash your faces and hands......... and if you are in a state of *janābah* (after sexual discharge), purify yourselves”

[89] “But whenever good came to them, they said: “ours is this”. And if evil afflicted them, they ascribed it to the evil omens”

[90] “And when We cause mankind to taste of mercy, they rejoice therein; but when some evil afflicts them because of (evil deeds and sins) that their own hands have sent forth, behold , they are in despair”

[91] “And whether you die”

[92] “If he dies”

[93] “And when harm touches men, they cry sincerely only to their Lord, turning to him in repentance; but when He gave them a taste of His Mercy, behold , a party of them associates partners in worship with their Lord”

As for the verse “wa ithā an`amnā `alā `l-insān a`radha wa na’ā bi jānibihi wa ithā massahu `l-sharr fathū du`ā’in `arīdh”[94] (41:51). It was replied to it that the pronoun in the word “massahu” refers to a person who turns away and who is filled with pride, not to any person. The particle “ithā” is brought as a warning that for this person who turns away, is an evil punishment which will certainly afflict him.

`l-Khuwayyī said: “according to me, it is permissible that the particle “ithā” enters upon certainty as well as doubtful things because it is an adverb and a *sharţ* (condition). As for being an adverb, it enters upon certainty like all other adverbs.

5. The particle “ithā” differs with the particle “in” also in giving the meaning of *`l-`umūm* (generality). Ibn `Uśfūr said: “if you say ‘when Zayd is standing, `Amr is standing’, it conveys the meaning of whenever Zayd stands, `Amr stands”. He said that this is correct. In the particle “anna” which is *mashrūţ* (conditioned) by it, if it is non-existent the reply follows immediately. In the particle “in”, it does not occur unless despair in its existence materialised. In the particle “an” , its reply follows its *sharţ* when it is joined. It is not advanced nor delayed unlike the particle “in”. In the particle “anna”, whatever it enters upon cannot get a *sukūn* because it cannot bring a *sharţ*.

Khātimah

It has been said: “sometime the particle “ithā” is just an extra word”. He elucidated the verse “ithā `l-samā’u inshaqqat”[95] (84:1) i.e. the heaven split asunder like the verse “iqtarabat `l-sā`ah”[96] (54:1).

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[94] “And when We show favour to man, he withdraws and turns away; but when evil touches him, then he has recourse to long supplications”

[95] “When the heaven is split asunder”

[96] “The Hour has drawn near”

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The Script of the Qu’rān and the etiquettes of writing

A number of people, both past and present, have compiled separate works on this topic. Abū `Amr ‘l-Dānī is among them. Abū ‘l-`Abbās ‘l-Marākishī compiled a work titled *`Unwān ‘l-Dalīl fī marsūm khaţ ‘l-Tanzīl* in which he addressed the question of the script of the Quran and its differences with the rules of the Arabic script. He explained that the written form of the letters would vary because of variations in the meaning of their words. Hereunder I will, God willing, point to its objectives.

On the authority of his own chain of transmitters Ibn Ashtah in the work *‘l-Masāĥif* quotes Ka`b ‘l-Aĥbār as saying that: "The first person to compile an Arabic, a Syriac, and in fact, all scripts was Adam (s), three hundred years prior to his death. He wrote them in clay and then had them baked. When the earth was overcome by the Flood (those tablets were dispersed) and each community received its script which it then used for writing. Ismā`īl b. Ibrāhīm received the script of the Arabs.”

He also quoted Ibn `Abbās, on the authority of `Ikrima, as saying: "The first to coin the Arabic script was Ismā`īl. He compiled the entire script, its shape and its logic, and then streamlined it without any spacing between the letters. His son thereafter inserted spaces between the letters. In other words, all the latters in the script were conjoined, without any spaces; then his sons, Humas`a and Qaizhar inserted spaces. He also reports on the authority of Sa`īd b. Jubair that Ibn `Abbas who said: "The first script that God sent down from the Heavens was that of the Arabic alphabet.”

Ibn Fāris said: "We maintain that the script has divine origins because of God, Almighty's statement:`allama ‘l-insān mā lam ya`lam”(96:2)[1] and “Nūn! wa ‘l-qalam wa mā yasţurūn” [2](68:1) These letters are included in the names that God taught Adam.. Much has been reported about the letters of the alphabet (*abjad* letters) and the beginnings of writing, but this is not the place to discuss it. I have however, done so exhaustively in a separate work.

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[1] "(He) taught with a pen, taught man that which he knew not"

[2] "Nun! By the Pen and that which they write."

Section

One rule in Arabic is that words be written using the alphabet, and that care be taken in beginning and ending with them. The grammarians have established principles and rules for this very purpose. The Qu’rān of Uthman has, in some cases, contradicted these principles and rules. Ashhab (b. `Abd ‘l-`Aziz) said that on being asked if the Qu’rān may be written in the script that people recently compiled Mālik (b. Anas) replied: "No! It can only be written using the traditional script". This was reported by ’l-Dānī in the work *‘l-Muqni`*. Ashhab went on to say that there was no objection on the part of the scholars to this.

In another place he said: "Mālik, when asked if the letters *waw* and *alif*, wherever found in the Scripture, may be changed, said: "No!" Abu `Amr said that this referred to that *waw* and *alif* which appears in words but is not pronounced. An example is the *waw* as it appears in the word "*'ulū*" Imam Aĥmad (b. Hanbal) said: "It is unlawful to contradict the standardized Mushaf (Uthman's version of the Scripture) in regard to the writing of the *waw*, the *yā'*, the *alif*, etc.

Baihaqī in the work, *Shu'b ‘l-Imān* said: "Whoever writes the Scripture must follow the alphabet used in these other texts.” He should neither contradict nor make the smallest change in what they have written. After all, they were more knowledgeable, more truthful in heart and mind, and more trustworthy than us. It thus, does not behoove us to think of ourselves as worthy of sitting in judgement of them.

Hereunder, I set out rules pertaining to: omitted letters, added letters, the use of the letter hamza, inverted letters, separated letters, and letters that allow two forms of recital, of which only one is written.

Rule One: The Omission of letters

The alif is omitted in the following cases:

i-When it is attached to the ya' of the vocative as in Yā ayyuha ‘l-Nās; Yā Adam; Yā `Ibādī ;and Yā Rabb!

ii-When it is attached to the *ha'* of the premonitory particle as in hā'ulā’ī, and hā 'antum.

iii-When it is attached to the pronoun *nā*, as in anjainākum, and ātaināhu.

To this category belong the words: 'ulā’ika, lākin, and tabāraka together with their four subcategories. Also, the words Allāh and Ilāh wherever they appear. And the words ‘l-

Raĥmān and subĥāna except in the verse: “subĥāna rabbī”[3](17:93)

iv-After the letter lam as in: khalā'ifa, khilāfa rasūl Allāh, salām, ghulām, li’īlāf and yulāqu.

v-Between to lāms as in ‘l-kalāla, ‘l-Dalāla, khilāl ‘l-Diyār, Lalladhī bi Bakka.

vi-In every name having more than three letters, as in Ibrāhīm, Sāliĥ, Mīkā'īl. This however, is not the case with Jalūt, Talūt, Hāmān, Ya’jūj, and Ma'jūj. Dāwūd is included herein because of the omission of its alif and Isrā’īl because of the omission of its yā'. Scholars differ with regard to the words Hārūt, Mārūt, and Qārūn.

vii-In every dual form of both verbs and nouns when not at the beginning or end of a word. Examples are: rajulān, yu’allimāni, 'aďallānā, and ‘in hādhāne. An exception to this rule is the word yadāka in the verse "bimā qaddamat yadāka" (10:22)

viii-In all masculine as well as feminine, sound plurals, such as: allā`inūn and mulāqū rabbihim. Exceptions to this rule are the following: the word ţāgūn in ‘l-Dhāriyāt and ‘l-Tūr; the words kirāman kātibīn (11:82) and raudāt in Shūra. The words āyāt li ‘l-sā'ilīn, makr fī ‘āyātina, and āyātuna bayyināt in Yūnus. Also excluded are words wherein the alif is followed by a hamza as in: ‘l-śā'imīn wa ‘l-śā'imāt, or by a shadda as in ‘l-Dāllīn and ‘l-śāffāt. A second alif in such a word will also be omitted, except for verse 12, sab`a samāwāt in *Fussilat*.

ix-In every plural that takes the *mafā`il* or some similar form. Examples are: ‘l-masājid, masākin, ‘l-yatāmā, ‘l-Naśārā, ‘l-masākīn, ‘l-khabā'ith, ‘l-malā'ika. Wherever the word khaţāyāna appears the second alif will be omitted.

x-In every word depicting a number such as thalātha and thulātha. And the word sāĥir except at the end of *‘l-Dhāriyāt*. If the word is in the dual however, then both its alifs are omitted. The *alif* of the following words, when in the indefinite form, will also be omitted: ‘l-qiyāma, ‘l-shaiţān, sulţān, ta`ālā, allātī, allā'ī, khāliq, `ālim, qādir. The words ‘l-aśĥāb, ‘l-anhār and ‘l-kitāb. This applies to the indefinite forms of these words as well, except in the following cases: "Li kulli ajal Kitāb", "Kitāb ma`lūm" "Kitāb rabbīka", in *Kahf*, and "Kitab mubīn" in *‘l-Naml*. Also omitted is the alif of the basmala, including the verse: “Bism Allāh majrehā” [4](11:41), and the first letter of the imperative form of the verb

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[3] Say! Limitless in His Glory is my Lord!

[4] "In the name of God be its run"

sa'ala.

xi-In every word having two or three alifs together as in: Adam, ākhar, 'a'ashfaqtum, and 'a'andhartum. Also omitted is the alif in the word ra'ā except in the case of mā ra'ā, and wa laqad ra'ā as found in *1-Najm*, and the word *‘āl-'an* except in the verse: “fa man yastami’ al’āna” [5](72:9). And the two alifs of the word *1-'aika* except in the chapters, ‘l-Hijr and Qāf.

xii-The yā' of a defective noun having a nunation in the nominative and the accusative cases, as in the verse: "bāgh wa lā `ād" (173:2) The same is true in if such a word forms part of the vocative idāfa construction, except in the case of the verses: “Yā `ibādiya alladhīna asrafū” [6](53:39) and “yā `ibādiya alladhīna āmanū”[7], in *1-`Ankabūt*. It is omitted even when not part of the vocative, except in the case of the verses: “wa qul li `ibādī” and "asri bi `ibādī, as found in Tāhā and Hāmim respectively. Also included is the verse: “fa ‘udkhulī fī `ibādī wa udkhulī jannatī” [8] (89:29)

xiii-It is also omitted if it appears along with another yā' as in: waliyyin, ‘l-ĥawāriyyīn and muttaki'īn. Exceptions to this rule are: `illiyyīn, wa yuhayyi', hayyi', ‘l-makr ‘l-sayyi', sayyi'at, ‘l-sayyi’at, and af`a'īna. Also included is the word yuĥyī, not singly, but when attached to a pronoun.

Xiv-The ya' is also omitted wherever the following words occur: 'ati`ūn, fa ittaqūn, khāfūn, fa irhabūn, fa arsilūn, fa`u`budūn except in , Yā Sīn, wa ikhsaunī except in ‘l-Baqara; yakidūn except in fa kīdūnī jamī`an, fa`ittabi`ūnī except in Al `Imrān and Tāhā, fa lā tundhirūn, lā tasta`jilūn, lā takfurun, lā taqrabun, lā tukhzūn, lā tafďaĥūn, yahdiyani, sayahdīn, kadhdhabūn, yaqtulūn, an yukadhdhibūn, wa`īd, ‘l-jawār, bi ‘l-wād, and ‘l-muhtadūn, except in ‘l-A`rāf.

xv-The *waw* when it appears twice is omitted as in lā yastawūn, fa'u, wa ‘idh ‘l-mau'ūdatu, ya'ūsa.

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[5] "Who now or ever tries to listen"

[6] "O! my servants (ya `ibādiya) who have been excessive. . .”

[7] "O! my servants (ya `ibādiya) who proclaim faith. . .”

[8] "Now therefore, enter into the ranks of my servants and enter my Paradise."

xvi-The lām which is incorporated (mudgham) is omitted as in ‘l-lail, alladhī, illa, Allāh, allāhumma, alla`natu and its derivates, ‘l-lahwu, ‘l-laghwu, ‘l-lu'lu', ‘l-lāt, ‘l-lamam, ‘l-lahab, ‘l-laţīf, and ‘l-lawāma.

Section

Omissions that do not follow this Rule

The alif is omitted from: mālik ‘l-Mulk; dhurriyatan ďi`āfan; murāghaman; khādi`uhum; akkālūn li ‘l-suĥt; bāligh; li yujādilūkum; wa bāţilun mā kānū ya`malūn in ‘l-A`rāf and Hūd; ‘l-mī`ād as in ‘l-Anfāl; turāban, in ‘l-Ra`d ‘l-Naml, and `Amma, judhādhan, yusāri`ūna, ayyuha ‘l-mu`minūn, yā ayyuha ‘l-sāĥir, ayyuha ‘l-thaqalān, ummi Mūsa fārigha, wa hal nujazī, man huwa kādhibun, li ‘l-qāśiyāt, in ‘l-Zumr, athāratin, `āhada alaihu Allāh, and wa lā kidhdhāba.

The yā' is omitted from: ibrāhīm in Baqara, and wa ‘l-dā`i idhā da`āni; wa man ittaba`ani, saufa yu'tī Allāh, wa qad hadān, nunjī ‘l-mu'minīn, fa la tas'alni ma laisa, yauma ya'ti la takallamu, ĥatta tu'taunī mauthiqan, tufannidūn, ‘l-muta`āl, matāb, ma'āb and `iqāb, in Ra`d, and Ghāfir; fīhā `adhāb, ashraktumūnī min qabl, taqabbal du`ā'i, la'in akhkhartani, and yahdiyani. From *Kahf* the following five: 'in taranī, an yu'tiyanī, an tu`allimani, and nabghī. From Tāhā the ya' of the following verse is omitted: alla tattabi`anī. Also the following: wa ‘l-bād, inna Allāha lahād, an yaĥďurūn, rabbi 'irji`ūn, wa la tukallimūn, yasqīn, yashfin, yuĥ'yīn, wād ‘l-naml, 'atumiddūnani, fa mā ātāniya, tashhadūn, bi hād ‘l-`umyi, ka ‘l-jawāb, in yuridn ‘l-Raĥmān, lā yunqidhūn, fa isma`ūn, laturdīn, śāl ‘l-jaĥīm, ‘l-talāq, ‘l-tanād, tarjumūn, fa i`tazilūn, yunād ‘l-munādi, li ya`budūn, tuţ`imūn, yad`u ‘l-dā`i twice in Qamar; yasri, akramani, ahānan, waliya dīn.

The waw is omitted in the following cases: wa yad`u ‘l-Insān, wa yamĥu Allāh, in Shūra, yauma yad`u ‘l-dā`i, sanad`u ‘l-zabāniya. Marrakīshī said: The secret in omitting the waw in these four places is to illustrate the quickness of the act, the ease with which the subject will perform, and the severity of its occurrence on one who is so afflicted. And in the verse: "wa yad`u ‘l-insān" the omission illustrates the fact that this supplication would be easy for man, who will hasten towards it as he hastens towards things that are good for him. In fact, man, in terms of his natural tendencies, is closer to evil than he is to good. In the verse: "wa yamĥu Allāh ‘l-Bāţil" the omission alludes to the speed with which evil disappears and shrinks. In the verse: "yad`ū ‘l-dā`i" the omission alludes to the swiftness of the supplication as well as the response to the supplicants. And in the last verse, (sanad`u ‘l-zabāniya) the omission alludes to the swiftness of the (reckoning), the quick response of the angels of Hell, and the severity of the strike (on those destined for hell).

Rule Two

The Addition of Letters

The alif has been added to the waw in plural nouns such as yā Banī Isrā’īl, mulāqū rabbihim, and 'ulū ‘l-albāb as opposed to singular nouns such as la dhū `ilm. The exception to this however, are the words, ‘l-riba, and in imru'un halaka. The alif is also added at the end of singular and plural nouns, in the nominative and the accusative cases, except in the case of jā'ūka, and bā'ū wherever they occur. Also excluded are `atau `utuwwan, fa 'in fā'u, wa alladhīna tabawwa'u ‘l-dāra, `asa Allāhu an ya`fuwa `anhum in ‘l-Nisā, and sa`au fi āyātinā in Saba'.

After the inscribed hamza a waw is added as in tafta'u, mi'a, mi'atain, ‘l-dhanūna, ‘l-rasūla, ‘l-sabīla, wa la taqūlanna li shay'in, la adhbaĥannahu, la auda`ū lakum, ‘a lā ila Allāh, la ila ‘l-jaĥīm, lā tay'asū min rauĥ Allāh, innahū lā yay'asū, a fa lam yay'as.

An alif is inserted between the yā' and the jīm in jī'a, in ‘l-Zumar and ‘l-Fajr. The word ibn is always written with a hamza. A yā’ is also added to naba' ‘l-mursalīn, mala'ihī, mala'ihim, min ānā'i ‘l-lail in Tāhā, min tilqā'i nafsī, min warā'i ĥijab in Shūra, 'ītā'i dhi ‘l-qurba in ‘l-Naĥl, wa`duhū wa lākin in ‘l-Rūm, bi ayyikum ‘l-maftūn, banaināhā bi aid, afa'in māta, afa'in mitta. The waw is added to 'ulū and its derivatives and to sa'urīkum.

Murrākīshī said: "Just as these letters have been added to words such as jī'a, naba'i and the like to menace, show deference to, threaten and promise, so too, have they been added to the word bi aydin to glorify God's power through which He made the Heavens, which in terms of power, are without equal..

Kirmanī in the work *‘l-`Ajā'ib* said: "Prior to the advent of the Arabic script the shape of the fatĥa was in the form of the alif, the ďamma in the form of the waw, and the kasra in the form of the yā'. Thus, because of their proximity to the era of the first form of writing words such as la auda`ū and so on are written with an alif. instead of the fatha. Also, ītā'i dhi ‘l-qurba is written with a yā' instead of a kasra and 'ulā'ika and so on are written with a waw instead of a ďamma.

Rule Three

The Hamza

The vowel-less hamza, which may appear at the beginning, the middle, or the end, will conform to the vowel of the letter preceding it. Thus: i'dhan, 'u'tumina, ‘l-ba'sā', iqra', ji'nāka, hayyi', ‘l-mu'tūn, and tasu'uhum. In the following cases, however, it is omitted: fa iddāra’tum, ri'yā’, li ‘l-ru'yā’, shaţ'ahū. It is also omitted after the fa' at the beginning of an imperative as in fa'tu, and after the waw as in wa'tamiru.

As for the vowelled hamza, if it appears at the beginning of a word, or is attached to supplementary letter then it is always written on the alif as in Ayyūb, 'idhā, 'ulu, s'aśrifu, fabi'ayyi, and sa'unzilu. Exceptions to this appear in the following places: 'a'innakum latashhadūna, and ‘a’innakum la takfurūnā, and ‘a’innakum lata'tūna in ‘l-Naml and ‘l-`Ankabūt, ‘a’innā lamukhrajūnā, 'a'inna latāriku and 'a'inna lana in ‘l-Shu`arā'. Also: 'a'idhā mitna, 'a'in dhukkirtum, 'a'ifkan, 'a'imma, li'alla, la'in, yauma'idhin, ĥīna'idhin are all written with a yā’, except in qul 'a'unabbi'ukum, and hā'ulā’i when they are written with a waw.

If it appears in the middle of the word it will be placed on the letter that conforms to its vowel, for example sa'ala, su'ila, naqra'uhū. But this is not the case with jazā'uhu appearing in three places in Yusuf, and the words la'amla'anna, 'imtala'ati, ishma'azzat and iţma'annū. This rule also does not apply if the hamza has a fatha and the letter prior to it is given a kasra, or a ďamma. Also, where the hamza has a damma and the letter prior to it a kasra then it will be written in conformity to that letter. For example ‘l-khāţī'a, fu'ādaka, sanuqri'uka. If the previous letter is vowel-less, the hamza will be omitted, as in yus'al, lā taj'arū, except in the case of ‘l-nash'a and mau'ila, both in ‘l-Kahf.

As mentioned previously, if the hamza is preceded by an alif with a fatha then the letter resembling the hamza will be omitted because it has become attached to a letter identical to it. One example is the word abnā'anā. Also omitted is the alif in the word Qu’rānan as found in Yusuf and Zukhruf.

If the hamza with a damma or a kasra is preceded by an alif then it is not omitted as in ābā'ukum, ābā'ihim, except wa qāla auliyā'uhum, ilā auliyā'ihim in ‘l-An`ām and auliyā'uhū in ‘l-'Anfāl, and naĥnu auliyā'ukum in Fussilat.

As mentioned previously, when the hamza appears after a word that resembles it then it is omitted as in shana'ān, khāsi'īn, mustahzi'ūna. If it appears at the end then it assumes the vowels of the letter preceding it as in sab'a, shaţi'i, lu'lu'u. Exceptions are the following: tafta'u, yatafayya'u, 'atawakka'u, taźma'u, ma ya`ba'u, yabda'u, yunashsha'u, yadhra'u, naba'un, the first qāla ‘l-mala'u in qad aflaĥa, and all three in ‘l-Naml, jazā'ū in five places: twice in ‘l-Mā'ida, in ‘l-Zumr, ‘l-Shūra, and ‘l-Hashr, shurakā'u in ‘l-An`ām, and ‘l-Shūrā', ya’tīhim anbā’u in ‘l-An`ām;  `ulamā' banī, min `ibādī ‘l-`ulamā'u, ‘l-ďu`afā'u in Ibrahim and Ghafir, fī amwālina mā nashā'u, mā du`ā'u in Ghāfir, shufa`ā'u in ‘l-Rūm, inna hādha lahuwa ‘l-balā'u, balā'un mubīn in ‘l-Dukhān, bura'ā'u minkum. In all the foregoing cases the hamza is written on the waw.

If the letter preceding it is vowel-less then the hamza is omitted as in mil'u ‘l-‘ard, ďif'un, shay'in, ‘l-khab'u and mā'a. Farrā' has made the following omissions: latanū'u, wa an tabū'a, and ‘l-sū'a. I however, maintain that these three ought not to be omitted because the alif after the waw is not in the form of the hamza, but is added to the waw of the verb.

Rule Four

Substitution

To show stress, the waw in the following cases substitutes for the alif: : "’l-śalāt, ‘l-zakāt, ‘l-ĥayāt, and ‘l-ribā--except where these occur as part of the iďāfa construction--‘l-gadāt, mishkāt, ‘l-najāt, and manāt.

A yā’ substitutes for every alif that has been changed from it as in yatawāffakum. This occurs in both nouns as well as verbs, with or without an attached pronoun or a vowel. To this category belong yā ĥasrata and yā asafā, but not tatrā. Other examples are: kilta, hadānī, wa man `aśānī, ‘l-aqśa, aqśa ‘l-madīna, man tawallāhu, ţaghā ‘l-mā'a, and sīmahum. Also excluded are words in which the alif is preceded by a yā' as in ‘l-dunya, ‘l-ĥawāya, except the word yaĥya in the form of a noun or a verb.

The following words will be written with a yā’: ilā, `alā, 'annā meaning how, matā, balā, ĥatta. An exception is lada ‘l-bāb. Triliteral words, both nouns and verbs, that end in a waw will be written with an alif as in ‘l-śafā, shafā, `afā, mā zakā minkum, daĥāhā, talāhā, ţaĥāhā, and sajā. The word ďuĥā wherever it appears is an exception to this rule.

The non stressed nūn of emphasis will be written with an alif as in lanasfa`an, yakūnan, and idhan. It will also be written with a nūn as in ka ‘ayyin.

And the feminine hā' will be written except: in the case of raĥmat as appears in the following chapters: Baqara, 'A`rāf, Hūd, Maryam, Rūm and Zukhruf; ni`mat as appears in Baqara, āl `Imran, Mā'ida, Ibrāhīm, Naĥl, Luqmān, Faţir, and Tūr; sunnat as appears in Anfāl, Fāţir, and for the second time in Ghāfir, imra'at when coupled with its partner, tammat kalimatu rabbika 'l-ĥusna, fa naj`al la`nat Allāh, wa 'l-khāmisata an la`nat Allāh; the word ma`siyat as appears Qad Sami`a, inna shajarat 'l-Zaqqūm, qurratu ayn, jannt na`īm, baqiyyatullahi, yā abati, allāt, marďātī, hayhāta, dhāta, ibnat, and fiţrat.

Rule Five

Disjunctions and Conjunctions

The words 'an and lā will be conjoined except in the following ten cases: an lā aqūla and an lā taqūlu in A`rāf, an lā malja'a in Hūd, an lā ilāha, an lā ta`budū illa Allāh, in Aĥqāf, an lā tushrik in Hajj, an lā ta`budū in Yā Sīn, an lā ta`lū in Dukhkhān, an lā yushrikna in Mumtaĥina, and an lā yadkhulannā in Nūn.

The words min and mā will be conjoined except in min mā malakat in Nisā' and Rūm, min mā razaqnākum in Munāfiqūn, and min man, in all places. The following are also conjoined: `an and mā except in `an ma nuhū; in and mā with a kasra except in the case wa in ma nuriyannaka in Ra`d; in mā with a fatha in all cases; `an and man except in wa yasrifuhu `an man yashā' in Nūr,  `an man tawalla in Najm; 'am and man except in the case am man yakūnū in Nisā', am man assasa, am man khalaqnā in Sāffāt, am man ya'ti āminan; in and lam with a kasra except fa in lam yastajībū in Qasas; the fi and mā except in the following eleven places: the second fī mā fa`alna in Baqara, li yabluwakum in Mā'ida and An`ām, qul lā ajidu, fī mā ishtahat in Anbiyā', fī mā afaďtum, fī mā hāhuna in Shu`arā', fī mā razaqnākum in Rūm, fī mā hum fīhi, fī mā kānū fīhi, both in Zumar, wa nunshi'akum fī mā lā ta`lamūn in Wāqi`a; the words innā and mā except in inna mā tū`aduna in An`ām; annā  with a fatĥa and mā except in anna mā yad`ūna in Luqmān and Hajj; kullu and mā except kulla mā ruddū ila 'l-fitnati, and min kulli mā sa'altumūhu; bi'sa and mā except when attached to the letter lam, the words ni`imma, mahmā, rubbamā, ka'annamā, and way ka'anna.

The following words are disjoined: haithu and mā, an with a fatĥa and lām, an and lan except in Kahf and Qiyāma; ayna and mā except in fa aynamā tuwallū and ainamā yuwajjihhu. There is some dispute about aina mā takūnū and ainamā kuntum ta`budūna in Shu`arā'. Also disjoined are ainamā thuqifū in Aĥzāb, likai lā except in āl `Imrān, Hajj, Hadīd, and the second occurrence in 'Aĥzāb; Yauma hum, lāta ĥīna, and ibn umma except in Tāhā where the hamza is written on a waw, and the hamza of ibn is omitted to become yabna'umma.

Rule Six

Where two Recitations exist and the Script Follows one of Them

We mean hereby recitations other than those that are deemed rare. To them belong the following: māliki yaum ‘l-dīn, yukhādi`ūna, wā`adna, ‘l-sā`iqa, ‘l-riyāĥ, tufādūhum, taźāharūn, wa lā tuqātilūhum, laula daf`u, farihānun, and ţa'iran. And in āl `Imrān and Mā'ida the word muďā`afa. Other words include: `aqadat aimānakum, ‘l-'awwalīn, lāmastum, qāśiyatan, qiyāman, khaţī'atikum, ţā'if, ĥāsha li Allāhī, wa saya'lamu ‘l-kuffār, tazāwaru, zakiyatan, falā tuśāĥibnī, la ittakhadhta, mihād, wa ĥarām `alā qaryat, innā Allāh yudāfi`u, sukārā, wa mā hum bi sukārā, ‘l-mudghata `iźāma, fa kasauna ‘l-`iźāma, sirāja, bal iddāraka, wa lā tusa``ir, rabbanā bā`id, asāwiratan; all of the above are written without the alif–their recitation however, is both with and without the alif.

The following whilst written only with a ta' are nonetheless recited both in the plural as well as the singular forms: ghayābāt ‘l-jubb, 'unzila `alaihi āyāt, in `Ankabūt, thamarāt min akmāmihā in Fuśśilat, jimālat, fahum `ala bayyinat, and wa hum fi ‘l-ghurufāt āminūn. Also: taqiyyatan with a ya', li'ahaba with an alif, yaqďi ‘l-ĥaqq without an alif in yaqďi, 'itūnī zubura ‘l-ĥadīd with an alif only, nunji ‘l-mu'minīn with a single nūn only, ‘l-śirāt wherever it appears, baśţa in 'A`rāf, ‘l-muśaiţirūn and muśaiţir written with a śād only and not with any other letter. Sometimes a word is written such that it allows both recitations as in the word fākihūn whose alif is dropped because it is a sound plural.

Rule Six on the Script of the Qu’rān

That which is Written in Accordance with the Rare Recitations

In this category are the verses “awa kullamā `āhadū” and “inna ‘l-baqara tashābaha `alainā”. As for the *bā’* in the verse “mā baqiya min ‘l-ribā” it is written with a ďamma and the waw is vowelless. Also in this category are: “falaqātalūkum”; innamā ţā’iruhum; ţā’iruhū fī `unuqihī’; tusaqiţ; sāmiran; wa fiśāluhū fi `āmain; `alaihim thiyāb sundusin khudrin; khitāmuhū misk; and fa udkhulī fī `ibādī.

Section

As for the variant readings, those that which are known for additions that are not written, as in: auśā, wa wassā, tajrī taĥtahā, wa min taĥtihā, sayaqūlūna Allah, lillāhi, wa mā `amilat aydihim, wa mā `amilathu, All of this is found in the Imam’s copies of the Qu’rān.

Note

Because the shapes of the letters are widely recognized the script of the opening letters of the chapters follow such patterns rather than the sounds they emit. The opening letters ĥāmīm and `ainsīnqāf are separated, but not aliflāmmīmsād and kāfhāyā`ainśād: this is consonant with the previous six chapters that begin with similar letters.

Section: The Etiquettes of Writing

Embellishing the script of the Qu’rān, writing legibly, clearly, and meticulously is recommended. Appending it and writing it in miniature form is disapproved. Abū `Ubaid in his work *‘l-Faďā’il* reports that `Umar took exception to a man bearing a Qu’rān scripted in fine writing and he therefore beat him. He then said: Magnify the Book of God.” And `Umar was gratified to see a Qu’rān in bold script. `Abd ‘l-Razzāq reports that `Alī disapproved of the Qu’rān being miniaturized. Abū `Ubaid reports that he also disapproved of the Qu’rān being written on something small. He along with Baihaqī report in the work *Shu`ūb ‘l-’Imān* that Abū Hakīmat ‘l-`Abdī as having said: “`Ali passed by me while I was writing the Qu’rān and said: “Make your script legible” So I sharpened my pen somewhat and began writing He then said: “Yes! Illuminate it thus just as God has.” Baihaqī quotes a mauqūf tradition quoting `Alī as having said: “A man was pardoned on account of the great pride he took in writing ‘In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful’

On the authority of a *marfū’* tradition as narrated by Abān, Abū Nu`aim reports in the work *Tarīkh Isfahān* as does Ibn Ashtah in *‘l-Maśāĥif* that Anas b. Mālik said: “God will forgive one who embellishes the statement ‘In the Name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful”. Ibn Ashtah also reports that `Umar b. `Abd ‘l-`Azīz wrote to his officials saying: “When one of you writes Bism Allāh ‘l-Raĥmān ‘l-Raĥīm then let him lengthen the word ‘l-Raĥmān. And he reports that Zaid b. Thābit disliked that Bism Allāh ‘l-Raĥmān ‘l-Raĥīm be written with the letter *sīn* not legible. He also reports from Yazīd b. Abū

Habīb that when writing to ‘Umar `Amr b. ‘l-`As’s scribe neglected to write the letter sin in the *basmala*. `Umar then beat him. On being asked why the Prince of the Faithful beat him, he said: “on account of the *sīn*!” He also reports that Ibn Sīrīn disliked lengthening the bā’ and attaching it to the mīm without the sīn.

Ibn Abu Dāwūd reports in the work *‘l-Masāĥif* that Ibn Sīrīn disapproved of lengthening the script of the Qu’rān. When asked why, the narrator replied that it was a kind of imperfection. Using impure material to write is also prohibited. Using gold, is praiseworthy, as pointed out by Ghazzālī. But Abū `Ubaid reports that Ibn `Abbās and Abū Dharr Ghifārī and Abū Dardā’ disliked this practice. He also reports that a copy of the Qur’ān embellished with gold came under Ibn Mas`ūd’s scrutiny, and he said: “The best way of embellishing the Qur’ān is through recitation with conviction. Our Companions have said: “Inscribing it on walls and fences is reprehensible, but doing so on roofs is even more so.” This is because it is walked upon. Abū `Ubaid quotes `Umar b. `Abd ‘l-`Azīz as saying: “Do not write the Qur’ān in places that are trodden upon.

What of using a script other than Arabic? Zarakashī has said: “I have not seen any discussion by the scholars on this topic. But it seems to be acceptable”, he said, “ because one who is able to recite it in Arabic will do even better thereby.” But in keeping with the rule prohibiting its recitation in any language other than Arabic, this too, would seem to be prohibited. This is further supported by their statement: “The pen is one of two forms of speaking!” And the Arabs knew no written script other than Arabic. And the Almighty has said: “In the plain Arabic language.” (42:195)

Section

Ibn Abu Dāwūd reports from Ibrāhīm ‘l-Taimī that `Abd Allāh (ibn `Abbās) said: "The Qur’ān should be penned in none other than the Mudarī dialect.” Ibn Abū Dāwūd said: "This is of the most noble dialects (of the Arabic language)"

Note

Opinions differ on who first inserted the diacritical marks and the desinential inflections in the Qu’rān. Some say that the first to do so was Abū ‘l-Aswad ‘l-Du’alī under the directive of `Abd ‘l-Malik b. Marwān, others that it was Hasan ‘l-Basrī and Yaĥya b. Ya`mar, and others still, that it was Naśr b. `Asim ‘l-Laithī.

As for the *hamza* (the character designating the glottal stop), the shadda (the doubling sign over the consonant), the ru'm (the slurring of the final vowel) and the ishmām (a sound between the kasra and the ďamma) Khalīl (the grammarian) is said to have added them.

According to Qatāda: "They first introduced the dots; then verses in groups of five were demarcated followed by groups of ten. Another scholar maintained: "The first innovation in the script of the Qu’rān was the insertion of diacritical dots at the end of the verse, followed by the dots of the opening, and the closing statements.

Yaĥya b. Abū Kathīr, in a report narrated by Ibn Abū Dāwūd said: "The Companions new nothing of the innovations that were introduced in the Qu’rān except for the three dots that appear at the head of the verses.

Abu `Ubaid and others report Ibn Mas`ūd as having said: "Maintain the purity of the Qu’rān; do not adulterate it with anything.' It is reported that Nakha`ī disliked putting diacritical marks on the Qu’rān; Ibn Sirīn disliked putting diacritical marks, opening, and closing markers in the Qu’rān; and Ibn Mas`ūd and Mujāhid disliked the insertion of the word *`ushr* into the Qur’ān

Ibn Abū Dāwūd reports that Nakha`ī disliked: inserting the word *`ushr*, and the opening markers into the Qur’ān, reducing its size, and inserting the names of the chapters. Once, on being presented with a copy of the Qu’rān with its chapter names inserted he said: "Erase it, for Ibn Mas`ūd disliked this.” It is also reported that Abu ‘l-`Aliya disliked inserting additional sentences into the Qur’ān, and inserting chapter names, and opening and closing markers.

Mālik said: "Inserting diacritical marks in copies of the Qu’rān that are used to teach children is unobjectionable, but not those recited by their mothers. Hulaimī said: In light of the statement: “maintain the purity of the Qu’rān" it is undesirable to insert the *a`shar*, the *akhmas*, the chapter names and the verse numbers in the Qur’ān. But diacritical marks are acceptable, for they have no form that may create the impression that material extraneous to the Qu’rān are part thereof. Their purpose is merely to point to the structure of the recited text, which is why its insertion is unobjectionable in the case of one who is in need of it.

Baihaqī said: "One of the etiquettes of the Qu’rān is that it be emboldened, and thus be written clearly in the best possible script. Its letters should not be written small or in half size, or mixed with other script such as the numbers of the verses, the signs of prostration, the markers indicating one tenth, the pauses, the variant recitations, or the commentaries of the verses. Ibn Abū Dāwūd quotes Hasan and Ibn Sīrīn as having said: "The insertion of the diacritical marks inthe Quran is all right"

He also reports that Rabī`a b. Abū `Abd ʻl-Raĥmān said: "Inserting the vowel points is all right" Nawawī said: "Inserting the vowel signs and the diacritical marks is in fact a praiseworthy act for it acts as a protection from wrongful and distorted recitations." Ibn Mujāhid said: "It is important not to insert diacritical marks except on letters that allow them. Dānī said: "I will not consent to writing the diacritiical marks in black, because this distorts the text of the Qu'rān, nor will I permit putting the variant readings together in a single copy of the Qu'rān in multi colors. This I believe is the greatest form of corrupting the text and the script. I would prefer that the diacritical marks, the diptote (tanwīn), the doubling sign (tashdīd), the vowel-less sign (sukūn), and the sign of elongation (madd) be written in red, whilst the *hamza* be written in yellow."

From among our Companions, Jurjānī in the work *ʾl-Shāfī*, had this to say: "Writing the commentary of the words of the Qu'rān between the lines is a reprehensible act."

Notice

During the first era the vowels were indicated by way of dots: thus, the fatĥa was indicated by way of a dot on the beginning of the letter, the ďamma by a dot on the end of the letter, and the kasra by a dot below the beginning of the letter. This was the method adopted by Dānī. The form that is popular today, that of assigning diacritical marks taken from the words themselves, was introduced by Khalīl the grammarian. It is clearer, by far, and adopted universally. In this case the fatha is represented by a long mark over the letter, the kasra is the same but below the letter, and the ďamma is a miniature waw above the letter, while the diptote is the doubled form of the same signs. If however, the letter belonged to the *iẓhār* category, appearing that is, in front of a throat letter (ĥā, kha, ha, ĥamza, `ain and ghain) then the sign shall be placed above the two words; otherwise, in between. The omitted alif (alif maĥdhūfa) and its antecedent (mubdal minhu) shall be written in red while the omitted ĥamza (ĥamza maĥdhūfa) shall be written alone, and not on any letter, and it shall be written in red as well. On the nun and the diptote the sign of inversion (`alama ‘l-iqlāb) the '*mīm*' shall also be written in red. The hamza that is in front of a throat letter shall remain vowel-less, but it will be pronounced when incorporated (*idghām*) and silent (*ikhfā'*). The hamza shall accept the sukun sign where necessary, it shall be silent when incorporated, it shall be doubled thereafter, except in the case of the letter ţā’ appearing in front of the letter tā’. In the latter case, a sukūn will be placed upon it. An example, is the word *farraţtu* (39:56) The madd letter must not be lengthened more than the equivalent of a vowel.

Notice

Harbī in the work Gharīb ‘l-Hadīth said: "Ibn Mas`ūd's statement that the Qu’rān be left pure could mean one of two things: firstly, that the purity of its recitation be maintained, not be mixed with something else, and secondly, that its script, be free from diacritical marks and the *ta`shīr* signs.

Baihaqī said: "Most likely, he meant that it not be mixed up with other scriptures, for apart from the Quran, these are all received from the Jews and the Christians; and they cannot be trusted with them.

Section

Ibn Abū Dāwūd reports in the work *‘l-Masāĥif* that Ibn `Abbās objected to the practice of taking a fee for writing the Qu’rān. He reports something similar from Ayyūb ‘l-Sikhtiyānī, whilst from Ibn `Umar and Ibn Mas`ūd he reports that they disliked the sale and purchase of the Qu’rān, and the taking of a fee for its writing. But he reports that Mujāhid, Ibn ‘l-Musayyib, and Hasan found the practice acceptable. He also reports that on being asked about selling copies of the Qur’ān Sa`īd b. Jubair replied "It is acceptable, for they take compensation only for their efforts.” He also reports that on being asked about trading in the Qur’ān Ibn ‘l-Hanafiyya replied: “It is acceptable for only sheaves of paper are being sold.” He also quotes `Abd Allāh b. Shaqīq as stating that the Companions of the Messenger of God were very strictly against trading in the Qur’ān. He also quotes Nakha`ī as saying: "The Qu’rān is neither sold nor inherited." He also reports that (Sa`īd) b. ‘l-Musayyib objected to trading in the Qur’ān, and said: "Help your brother by providing him with the Book, or give him a copy" He also reports from `Aţā' that Ibn `Abbās said: "You may purchase a copy of the Book but not sell it" He reports that Mujāhid too prohibited the sale of the Book but allowed its purchase.

Three distinct views of the pious ancestors thus emerge of which the third regards its sale but not its purchase as objectionable. In our view this is the soundest opinion, one that is ratified in the work *Sharĥ ‘l-Muhadhdhab* and transposed in the work *Zawā’id ‘l-Rauďah*, quoting Shāfi`ī. Rāfi`ī said: "It has been said that the price paid is for the book itself, for the words of God cannot be sold. And it has also been said that the price is payment for the writing. These two views have been attributed to Ibn ‘l-Hanafiya and Ibn Jubair. There is, in this regard, a third view that the (price paid) is reimbursement for both the aforementioned costs. Ibn Abū ‘l-Dāwūd reports that Sha`bī said "It is acceptable to sell copies of the Qu’rān, for only the sheets of paper and the labor of writing are being paid for.

Section

The shaikh, `Izz ‘l-Dīn b. `Abd ‘l-Salām said the following in the work *‘l-Qawā`id*: "To stand out of respect for the Qu’rān is an innovation that was not prescribed in the first generation." But the correct view in this regard is the statement of ‘l-Nawawī in the work *‘l-Tibyān* that it is indeed a commendable act, because it glorifies the Qu’rān and because it is thus, not subject to neglect.

Section

It is commendable to kiss the Qu’rān for `Ikrima b. Abū Jahl (r) used to do so and because, as some have said, it is by analogy, not unlike the kissing of the Black Stone. Also, because it is a gift from God, kissing it is a meritorious act, much like the kissing of a young child.

There are, in this regard three opinions recorded from Aĥmad (b. Hanbal): that he regarded it as permissible, as commendable, and that he suspended judgement. This because this practice, its merits notwithstanding is an act of worship, wherein the use of analogy is proscribed. This is why `Umar said with regard to the Black Stone: "Had I not seen the Prophet (s) kiss you I would not have kissed you!"

Section

Applying perfume to the Qur’ān is commendable, as is perching it on a rack, whilst it is impermissible to rest on it, for this is insulting and disrespectful. Zarkashī said: "It is also disrespectful to stretch one's feet in its direction." Ibn Abu Dāwūd in his work ‘l-Maśāĥif reports that Sufyān disliked hanging the Qu’rān (on walls etc.). He also reports ‘l-Daĥĥāk as having said: "Do not use a stand for the books of Hadīth as you do for the Qu’rān.

Section

It is, according to the most authentic opinion, permissible to show respect to the Qur’ān by embellishing it with silver. Baihaqī reports that Walīd b. Muslim said: "I asked Mālik about embellishing the Qu’rān with silver, so he produced a copy of the Qu’rān for our benefit, and said: 'My father informed me from my grandfather that when the Qu’rān was compiled in the era of `Uthmān they embellished the copies in the same manner. As for its embellishemnt with gold, it is, according to the most authentic view, permissible for a female, but not a male. Some restrict this permissibility to the Book itself, and not to its cover, but it would seem that they are both permissible.

If there is need to suspend some pages of the Qu’rān because they have become moist for instance then in the view of ‘l-Hulaimī doing so in some crevice is unlawful, because they may fall and be trampled upon. **B**ecause of the disrespect that would be shown to the written text, it is also not permisible to shred its pages, and thus cause its letters and words to be detached from each other. Hulaimī also said it is permissible to wash them with water while burning them is not objectionable, for `Uthmān  reduced those copies of the Qur`an havign abrogated verses to the fire and no one objected to it. Others however, have stated that burning them is better than washing for in the latter case some of it would undoubtedly drop on the ground. The judge, Husain, in his notes, has stated emphatically that burning is unlawful becuase it is disrespectful, but Nawawī regards it as merely objectionable. The works of some Hanafite scholars declares that if the Qu’rān becomes wet it should not be burned, but buried instead. This view is questionable, because it may cause the Qu’rān to be trampled upon.

Section

Ibn Abū Dāwūd reports from (Sa`īd) b. ‘l-Musayyib as saying: "It is not permissible for you to say musaihif musaijid (the diminutive forms of the words musĥaf and musjid) for that which belongs to God is indeed majestic.

Section

Our ruling and that of the majority of shcolars is that it is not permissible for those big or small, who are ritually impure, to touch the Qu’rān. This is so because of the statement of the Almighty: "None except the pure are permitted to touch it." (56:79) A tradition of the Prophet (s), reported by Tirmidhī states: "The Qu’rān must be touched by none other than one who is pure."

Conclusion

Ibn Māja and others report from Anas a marfū` tradition stating: "Seven acts will confer on the servant of God rewards even while he is interred in his grave: one who imparts knowledge, one who digs a canal, one who digs a well, one who plants date palms, one who builds a musjid, one who leaves a child who seeks his pardon after he has died, and one who bequeths a copy of the Qu’rān.

Section Sixty Four

The Miracles of the Qur’ān

Many scholars have dedicated special works to this topic, among them: ‘l-Rummānī, ‘l-Zamlakānī, ‘l-Imām ‘l-Rāzī, Ibn Surāqa, the judge Abū Bakr ‘l-Bāqillānī, and Ibn ‘l-`Arabī. And nothing comparable to the latter’s work has been compiled.

Know that a miracle is defined as any act that contradicts the laws of nature, is the result of some challenge, and is free of contradiction. A miracle is either perceptible or rational. Because of their stupidity and their lack of insight most miracles produced for the benefit of the Children of Israel were perceptible to the senses. And because of their substantial intelligence, and their mature intellect, most of the miracles of this community have been rational. Furthermore, given the longevity of the sharī`ah, and the fact that it will endure till the Day of Resurrection, it was the rational miracle that was chosen as its accompaniment. Bukhārī reports the Prophet (s) as saying in this regard: “Every one of the prophets was given that which induces faith in human beings. I was given revelation which God had revealed to me. I am optimistic that I will have the most followers of them all.”

It has been suggested that this means that the miracles of the prophets terminated with the termination of their tenures; thus only those present at the time were witness to them. But the miracle of the Qur’ān will endure till the Day of Resurrection. It is its style, its rhetoric, and its supply of information pertaining to the unseen that defies convention; in every epoch some of this information emerges and thus validates its claims.

This may also mean however, that past, manifest, miracles were all perceptible and perceived by the eye. This includes the miracle of the she camel of Saleĥ, and the staff of Moses. The miracle of the Qur’ān however, is perceived with insight, which is why its followers are more plentiful. Also, that which is perceived with the organs of perception disappears when the perception itself ends, whilst that which is perceived by the intellect endures, and is observed uninterruptedly by those who succeed the initial observers. group.

The following appears in the work *Fatĥ ‘l-Bārī*: “Reconciling these two views is possible because their goals are not contradictory.” And the intelligentsia are unanimous that the Book of God is a miracle, whose challenge no person was able to meet. The Almighty says: “wa in aĥad min ‘l-mushrikīn istajāraka fa ajirhu ĥatta yasma`a kalām Allāh” [1](9:6) If not for the fact that listening to the Qur’ān was a prerequisite it may count against them their fate would not have been made contingent on such listening. Also, the Qur’ān was not a miracle it would not have been used as argument against them. ????

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[1] “And if some polytheist seeks your protection then grant him such protection, so that he may be able to listen to the Word of God.”

The Almighty says: “wa qālū laulā ‘unzila `alaihi āyāt min rabbihī; qul innamā ‘l-āyāt `inda Allāh wa innamā ana nadhīr mubīn; a wa lam yakfihim annā anzalnā `alaika ‘l-kitāb yutlā `alaihim.” [2] (29:50-51) He gives notice that the Book is among His signs, providing ample evidence, substituting for the miracles of others besides him, and a sign of the miracles given to the other prophets. The Prophet (s) brought this to them at a time when they were the most articulate of communities, the most eloquent of orators, and he challenged them to bring the likes of it. They however, were unable to do so, even after several long years of grace. Thus, the Almighty says: “falya’tū bi ĥadīth mithlihū in kānū sādiqīn” [3](10:38) And in the verse: “am yaqūlūna iftarāhu; qul fa’tū bi `ashar suwar mithlihī; muftarayāt wa ‘ud`ū man istata`tum min dūn Allāh in kuntum sādiqīn; fa in lam yastajībū lakum fa`lamū annamā ‘unzila bi `ilm Allāh” [4](11:13-14) He challenged them to produce ten chapters like unto it. And in the verse: “am yaqūlūn iftarāhu; qul fa’tū bi sūrat mithlihī” (10:38)[5] He then challenged them to produce a single chapter. The challenge is then repeated in the verse: “wa in kuntum fī raib min mā nazzalnā `alā `abdinā fa’tū bi sūrat mithlihī” [6](2:23) When, despite their legions of orators and rhetoricians, they failed to meet the challenge, or to produce a single comparable chapter, they were called upon to confess their own inability and the inimitability of the Qur’ān. It thus says: “qul la’in ijtama`at ‘l-ins wa ‘l-jinn `alā an ya’tū bi mithli hādhā ‘l-Qur’ān lā ya’tūna bi mithlihī;

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[2] “They said: “If only a sign from his Lord was sent to him! Say: “All signs are form God, and I am no more than a manifest warner. Does it not suffice them that We send to you the Book which you recite unto them!”

[3] “Let them bring a discourse like unto it, if they are truthful.”

[4] “Or do they say that he fabricated it! Say: “Bring then, ten forged chapters like it, and seek help from whomsoever you want to besides God, if it is that you are truthful. If they respond not, then know that it was indeed revealed with God’s knowledge.”

[5] “Or do they say that he fabricated it! Say: “Bring then a single chapter like it.”

[6] “And if you are in doubt about that which We revealed to Our servant, then bring forth a single chapter like it.”

wa lau kāna ba'duhum li ba'd zahīra" [7](17:88) These were the eloquent antagonists, much desirous of putting out his light, and subverting his message. Had they been up to the challenge they would certainly have focused their energies on clinching this argument. But no reports exist of any one contemplating or taking up this task. Instead, they were belligerent at times, and demeaning at others. On occasion they called it magic, at others, poetry, and at others still, ancient fables. This was all the result of their perplexity and their disorientation. Ultimately, they settled for the judgement of the sword on their necks, the enslavement of their progeny and their spouses, and the confiscation of their property. All of this, and to a proud and chauvinistic people, who would surely have hastened to respond if they felt capable of doing so; this would certainly have been a lot easier on them. Hākim reports from Ibn `Abbās: "'l-Walīd b. 'l-Mughīra approached the Prophet (s) who then recited parts of the Qur'ān to him, which caused him to soften somewhat. This reached Abū Jahl, who went to him and said: "O Uncle! Your people would like to collect money to give to you, so that you may shun what Muĥammad presented to you." He replied: "Quraysh knows that I am of its wealthiest!" He said: "Then say something about him indicating to your people your aversion of him." He said: "What shall I say! By God! None of you knows as much poetry as I do, as much poetic meter, as many odes, and the poetry of the invisible beings. By God! "His words do not, in the least, resemble any of this. By God! That which he speaks has a certain sweetness, a certain elegance, its top section is fruit bearing, its lower section is substantial, it surpasses and is not surpassed, and it shatters everything under it. He said: "Your people will not be satisfied until you say something about him." He said: "Let me think this over." After doing so, he said: "This is harmful magic which he acquires from some other source."

Jāĥiz has said: "God had commissioned Muĥammad (s) at a time when no one was more advanced in poetry and oratory than the Arabs; theirs was a language most insightful, and a vocabulary, most substantial. He invited both great and small to the oneness of God and to the affirmation of his commission as messenger. He invited them with such arguments that eventually disposed of all excuses, and removed all doubts. It was their chauvinism and their caprice that impeded their acknowledgment, and not their perplexity or ignorance. He then made them realize their fate by way of the sword: he declared war on them and they did the same. He killed their prominent members, their notables, their uncles, their cousins, all the while arguing against them by way of the Qur'ān, and inviting them night and day to contradict him by producing a single chapter or a few verses, if indeed he was a liar.

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[7] "Say: "if all human beings and all invisible beings joined forces to bring forth something similar to this Qur'ān they would not bring the likes of it; not even if they supported each other."

The greater his challenge, the greater his censure of their inability, the more their inadequacies which had been concealed, began emerging. And when they ran out of excuses and arguments they said to him: “You know events of past communities which we do not, and you are thus able to produce things which we cannot.” He then said: “Then make up some thing!” But no orator took on that task, nor did any poet incline to it. Had he so inclined it would surely have been feigned, and as such this would have ben patently evident. And if this became evident then he would have encountered those who nonetheless, approve of , protect, and try to deceive, and who assert that such as person had indeed, provided prosody, and had confronted and contradicted the Qur'ān.

This would then indicate to an intelligent person the helplessness of these people, notwithstanding the breadth of their language, its sweetness, their facility over it, their numerous poets, many of whom had lampooned him, challenged the poets in his company, and the orators of his community. One single chapter or a just a few verses from them would have effectively nullified his assertions, undermined his mandate, and it would have clearly falsified him, quickly separated him from his followers without much effort. It would also have exiled him and stopped all financial assistance.

This was indeed, a significant measure hardly unknown even to those considerably less accomplished than Quraish and the Arabs in thinking and intelligence. They on the other hand, were purveyors of unusual odes, wonderful poetic meters, long eloquent orations, and pithy anecdotes, and they were adept at formulating words that rhymed, were muzdauj!!!, or were prosaic.

And after exposing the inability of those nearby he went on to challenge those far afield. It is thus incomprehensible that all these persons would have fallen folly to something as self evident as this. That these people, who were most haughty, and boastful, for whom discourse was the preeminent pursuit, failed in their moment of need--that need which itself spawns stratagems for inscrutable situations--how could it not have done the same in the case of something as obvious as this! It is also incomprehensible that they could have shut their eyes to, or abandoned a falsity that was of immense utility to them, for twenty three years; it is incomprehensible that those who had knowledge of this genre, and who had the means to deal with it, that they would not have taken up this challenge!"

Section

Now that it is established that the Qur'ān is indeed a miracle of the Prophet (s) it is incumbent that we turn attention to the actual areas of its inimitability. People have explored this a great deal , some appropriately, others wrongly. One group asserted that the challenge was inherent in the eternal language, an attribute of the godhead, that the Arabs were thus encumbered with that which was beyond their capabilities, and that this is what incapacitated them. This is to be rejected because that which cannot be determined cannot be considered a challenge. The truth is in the statement of the majority who say: "It inheres in that which alludes to the Eternal, in the words as such."

'l-Nazzām claimed that the miracle was in the act of distraction: God distracted the Arabs from taking up the challenge and stripped them of their intelligence. They certainly had the ability to meet the challenge, but as with all other miracles, extraneous factors prevented them from doing so." This view is unsound because the verse: "qul la 'in ijtama`at 'l-ins wa 'l-jinn" [8](17:88) points to their failure notwithstanding their ability. If ability was retracted their collaboration would have been futile, and akin to the collaboration of the dead. The failure of the dead is no cause for celebration! Furthermore, seeing that it is the Qur'ān that is unanimously considered a miracle, how could such a claim stand, given that this would infer that there is nothing miraculous about it? In fact, that would then have to be God's miracle seeing that is was He who took away the power to produce something comparable to the Qur'ān. Also, the 'distraction' argument would render the miracle time bound, and thus, inactive after the period of the challenge. It would strip the Qur'ān of the element of the miraculous, and destroy the unanimity of the community that the greatest miracle of the Prophet (s) is everlasting, and that no other miracle apart from the Qur'ān is similarly everlasting.

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[8] "Say even if all humans and all jinns collaborated. . .'

Abū Bakr, the judge, said: "Also nullifying the 'distraction' argument is the fact that if the challenge would have been met if not for the distraction, then the Word of God could not be considered a miracle. Rather, it becomes so because of hindrance. Thus the Word in and of itself would enjoy no special status over other works". He said: "This is no more surprising than the view of some among them that any one is able to produce something similar; they were slow to take up the challenge because they had no knowledge of its arrangement. Had they been equipped with the said knowledge they would certainly have met the challenge. This is also no more surprising than the view of some others who maintain that: 'The inability afflicted them alone; as for those who follow, they do have this ability to produce something similar." None of this is worth considering seriously.

One group stated: "It is miraculous in that it prophecies the future, and this was outside the capabilities of the Arabs." Another group stated: "It refers to all the information it incorporates pertaining to the legends of all past and future communities, as reported by those contemporaries who witnessed it."

Another group stated: "It refers to the information it incorporates pertaining to the state of their minds, which was not manifested through their words or their deeds. It thus says: "idh hammat tā'ifatān minkum an tafshalā" [9](3:122), and: "wa yaqūlūna fī anfusihim lau lā yu`adhdhibunā Allāh" [10](58:8)

Abu Bakr, the judge stated: "It is miraculous because of its arrangement, composition, and structure, and because it is unlike all the conventional speech patterns of the Arabs, and different from their forms of address. He said: "It is for this reason that they were unable to take up its challenge.” He said: “There is no way of recognizing the inimitability of the Qur’ān through the various styles of metaphor that they inserted into poetry, because the latter was not extraordinary. Rather, it is to be recognized through knowledge, experience, and through compositions such as poetry readings, oratory, prose writing, and proficiency in rhetoric. These are all paths well trodden, whereas the arrangement of the Qur’ān is without precedence, and without a master who may be followed. Thus there is unanimity that it is without parallel.” He said: “We believe that in parts of the Qur’ān the inimitability is more obvious, whereas in other parts it is obscure and subtle.”

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[9] ". . .when two groups among you had almost lost heart."

[10] "And they said to themselves: 'Why does God not punish us!"

The Imām Fakhr ‘l-Dīn has said: “It is inimitable because of its eloquence, its unique style, and because it is free of error.” And ‘l-Zamlakānī has said: “Its inimitability can be traced to particular sections thereof rather than to the Book as a whole. Its word structures for instance, are in perfect harmony with their corresponding scales, and the meaning of its phraseology is unsurpassed, such that every linguistic category is unsurpassed in the case of every single word and phrase.

Ibn `Atiyya said: “The correct opinion with regard to inimitability, as held by most scholars and the intelligentsia, is that it is to be found in its arrangement, its correct meanings, and its eloquent sequence of words. Just as God encompasses everything with His knowledge, so too, does He encompasses all discourses with His speech. Thus, no sooner is a word of the Qur’ān coined than God knows, by way of His omniscience, the appropriate word that must follow and the appropriate meaning that must be added. This is the case for everything from the beginning to the end of the Qur’ān. Human beings however, are generally ignorant, forgetful, and distracted, and it is thus, self evident, that no human being can encompass all of the foregoing. This is how the style of the Qur’ān attained the pinnacle of linguistic purity.

This also puts to rest the view of those who say: “The Arabs certainly did have the potential to respond in kind, but were distracted therefrom.” The truth is that no one had this potential, in the least.Thus, do you find that an eloquent person would spend an entire year polishing a poem or an oration, during which he would carefully scrutinize it and make the necessary changes, whereas if even a single word from the Book of God were to be removed it would not be substituted by something better, even after a close scrutiny of if the entire Arabic language. As for us, much of its brilliance is obvious to us, but in some places it remains obscure, and this is because we have less literary taste, and less excellence in improvising than the Arabs of that era.

Thus, have the Arabs, the masters of eloquence and the only worthy adversaries, provided proof against the entire world, just as the magicians had done with the miracles of Moses, and the physicians with that of Jesus. God does indeed, produce the miracles of the prophets in the most acclaimed pattern during their respective eras. Thus magic had reached its pinnacle of advancement during the era of Moses, medicine during the era of Jesus, and eloquence during the era of Muĥammad (s).

Hāzim had this to say in the work *Minhāj ‘l-Bulaghā’* “The inimitability of the Qur’ān resides in the fact that clarity and eloquence in all their forms suffuse every part of it, without any disjuncture. Nor can any human being match it. As for the speech of the Arabs and of those others who spoke their language, eloquence and clarity were not consistent throughout even the loftiest of such speech, except in the case of a handful of examples. Thereafter, this human speech was subject to human weakness, which caused the discontinuance of the beauty and the splendor of the language. The eloquence was not suffused in all of it, but was to be found in bits and pieces of it.’

And ‘l-Marākishī had this to say in the work *Sharĥ ‘l-Misbāĥ*: “The inimitability of the Qur’ān is known through a scrutiny of the science of rhetoric. It has been defined by one group as the instrument whereby mistakes, and incoherence are avoided during the delivery of meaning. It is by way of this discipline as well, that the modalities of eloquent speech are known, when such modalities are applied scrupulously to disparate situations.” This is because inimitability lies not in vocabulary alone, for in such a case the miraculous would have been present even before revelation. Nor does it lie in composition, for then all compositions would have been miraculous, nor in its use of grammar, for then, all speech that uses grammar correctly, would have been miraculous, nor yet in its style, for then, even elementary poetry could be construed as being miraculous. If the word *uslūb* referred to just any style then even the drivel of Musailima would be considered a miracle. Also, inimitability occurs without style as well, as is the case with the verses: “fa lammā istay’asū minhu khalasū najiyyan” [11](12:80) and: “fa isda` bi mā tumar” [12](15:94)

The Qur’ān’s inimitability does also not lie in their distraction from meeting the challenge, because they were in fact enthralled by its eloquence, and because the likes of Musailimah, Ibn ‘l-Muqaffa`, ‘l-Ma`arrī and others did indeed engage the Qur’ān, but were nonetheless unsuccessful in producing anything substantial, only that which the ears would reject, and from which human nature would recoil. Their attempts at duplicating its patterns of composition would have been scoffed at, patterns as had incapacitated the rhetoricians and muted the articulate.

There is general evidence of its inimitability in the fact that the Arabs, whose language this was, were unable to meet the challenge, and so those besides would be even less likely to succeed. More specifically, a careful scrutiny of its unique composition, would show up the fact that it has been revealed by the One whose knowledge encompasses everything.

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[11] “And after having despaired of him they conferred in private.”

[12] “Proclaim openly as you have been directed.”

In his exegesis ʻl-Isfahānī said: "Know that the inimitability of the Qur'ān has been discussed in two ways: firstly, as an intrinsic inimitability, and secondly, by way of distracting people from taking up the challenge. The first is concerned either with its eloquence, its rhetorical devices, or its sense. As for eloquence, and rhetorical devices, this type of inimitability is not related to its substance, which comprises of words and meanings. Its words are after all, their words, as the Almighty has said: "Qur'ānan `arabiyyan" [13](12:2) and "bi lisānin `Arabiyyin" [14](26:195) Nor is it related to meaning,, because much of it exists in previous scriptures, as the Almighty has said: "wa innahū la fī zubur ʻl-awwalīn" [15](26:196) As for the miracle of the transcendental knowledge contained in the Qur'an, of the knowledge pertaining to the dawn of creation and the resurrection, and of matters pertaining to the unseen, this is not exclusive to the Qur'ān as such. What is exclusive is the fact that all of it came from nowhere and is thus, without precedent. Tidings about the unseen are just that: tidings, regardless of whether they are arranged one way or another, appear in Arabic or in any other language, are explicitly mentioned, or are simply alluded to. Thus the specific composition is the form of the Qur'ān whilst the words and the meanings are its essence. It is a change in form and not in essence, that changes the status of an object as well as its denotation. Take, for example, the ring, the earring, or the bracelet: it is a change in their forms which causes a change in their names, and not a change in their essence, which may be gold, silver , or iron. A ring made of gold, silver or iron is still called a ring, even though their essences differ. A ring, earring or a bracelet made of gold will be named differently based on their varying forms, even though their essences are the same."

He said: "It thus emerges from this that the inimitability specific to the Qur'ān is related to a particular composition. That this particular composition is inimitable must be explained through reference to compositions as such, and then to the fact that the composition on hand, is indeed, unique.

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[13] ". . .an Arabic Qur'ān"

[14] "In the Arabic language"

[15] "And it is indeed, in the scriptures of former communities."

The composition of speech occurs at five levels:

1. Where individual letters are arranged side by side with each other such that they form any one of three kinds of words: the noun, the verb and the particle.
2. Where words are arranged side by side with each other such that they form useful sentences, of the kind that people generally use in their conversations, and in fulfilling their needs. This is also called prose.
3. Where such words are arranged side by side such that they act as openings and pauses, and additions and omissions. All of this is termed “arranged” (*‘l-manzūm)*
4. Where the endings of the foregoing structures are rhymed, and this is called “rhymed prose” (*‘l-musajja`*).
5. Where allowances are made in such structures for scale and meter, and this is called poetry (*‘l-shi`r)*.

That which is arranged is either in dialog form in which case it is referred to as an oration, or in written form, in which case it is referred to as a treatise (*‘l-risāla*)

Communication is thus limited to the foregoing forms, each having a specific format, whilst the Qur’ān encompasses the best of all formats, but in a way that is unique to it. This is attested to by the fact that it whilst it too, is a form of speech, it may however, not be referred to as a treatise, poetry, or as rhymed prose. When an articulate person hears this he is able to distinguish between it and all other forms. It is for this reason that the Almighty has said: “wa innahū la kitāb `azīz; lā ya’tīhi ‘l-bātilmin min baini yadaihi wa lā min khalfihī” [16](41:41-42). This is to announce that its composition does not conform to the conventions of human beings, such that it may be added to or subtracted from, as is the case with all other books.”

He said: “As for the miracle of distracting people from taking up the challenge, this too is clear upon reflection. Every creative activity, both praiseworthy and blameworthy, is in some subtle and affective manner, related to a community. A person preferring one vocation over another, does so with his heart intimately attached thereto, and his energies pressed into serving its calling, and he accepts such an assignment with an open heart, and devotes himself wholeheartedly to it. When God invited the rhetoricians, and the orators who flitted in the valley of meanings through their elocution, to confront the Qur’ān’s challenge, and when He incapacitated them, and caused them to fail to meet the challenge, all intelligent people at the time knew that this was due to some divinely decreed distraction. What miracle could be greater than where all the rhetoricians were outwardly incapable of taking up the challenge, and inwardly distracted from doing so.

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[16] “It is a impose scripture. Falsehood comes not near it from the front or from behind.”

‘L-Sakākī had this to say in the work *‘l-Miftāĥ*: “Know that the inimitability of the Qur’ān may be perceived but it will not be described, just as the right weight is perceived without being described. This is similar to perceiving the right amount of salt, or the right voice for a particular song. In addition, this inimitability is recognized only by those with the correct aptitude, or those steeped in the knowledge of and experienced in eloquence and rhetoric.”

Abū Hayyān ‘l-Tauĥīdī has said: “Bundār ‘l-Fārisī was asked of the place of inimitability in the Qur’ān, and he replied: ‘This is a question which imposes an injustice on the meaning, and is tantamount to your saying: ‘How does one man determine the existence of another?” No man determines any other. Rather, when reference is made to him in his entirety then he is identified, and his essence is made manifest. The same is true for the Qur’ān: as a token of its loftiness nothing referred to in it is not in and of itself also a sign, a miracle in comparison to things around it, and a guidance to one who utters it. Fully comprehending God’s purpose through His speech, and His secrets through His Books is beyond human capacity, and it is this which perplexes the mind, and beguiles the senses.

‘l-Khaţţābī has said: ‘Whilst most theoreticians are of the opinion that the element of inimitability in the Qur’ān pertains to rhetoric, illustrating this was problematic for them, and they therefore reduced this to individual predilections.” He said: “Close scrutiny suggests that speech appears in many forms, each of which varies depending on the level of discourse. There is the eloquent, composed, and pure style, the formal, unusual and moderate style, and the adequate, uninhibited, and relaxed style. These then are the preferred, and praiseworthy forms of communicating: the first is the best of them, the second is average, and the third is the lowest and the most accessible of them. The rhetoric of the Qur’ān includes parts of all three these forms, and takes a portion from each of them. The arrangement of these three forms has fashioned the kind of discourse that brings together the qualities of courtliness and charm, which when separated, are by description like opposites. Charm after all, does result from a relaxed style, whilst purity and succinctness are used to mediate various forms of harshness. The convergence of these two forms in its arrangement, notwithstanding their incompatibility, is a quality specific to the Qur’ān. It serves as a manifest sign of His Messenger (s).

Human beings however, face difficulties composing something comparable, and for many reasons.

These include:

1-Their knowledge does not encompass all nouns of the Arabic language and their conventions; these two elements encapsulate meaning. Their comprehension does not encompass the entirety of the objects to which such names refer. Nor does their knowledge fully comprehend all circumstances that warrant their composition, or their coming together. They are thus unable to compose something similar by choosing the best from that which is good. To establish speech the following three things are required: a preexisting word; a meaning upon which the word is based, and a common denominator regulating the two. Careful examination would suggest that the Qur’ān is in this regard, most prestigious and highly esteemed, so much so, that nothing compares to the purity, clarity, and sweetness of its words, nor to the integrity of its composition, and nothing more appropriate or even equal exists. As for meaning, every intelligent person will testify to its superiority in this area, and to it being of unsurpassed standards. These three qualities are to be found separately in a variety of communications, but they do not appear together, as part of a single composition, except in the utterances of the Omniscient, the Omnipotent. From this then emerges the fact that the Qur’ān is indeed inimitable, coming as it does, with the choicest of words, in the finest composition that incorporates the best meanings. These pertain to God Almighty's oneness, His loftiness in His attributes, a summons to His obedience, the manner in which He ought to be worshiped, a description of things lawful, things unlawful, things prohibited, and things permissible, advice and corrections, an enjoinment of that which is good and a prohibition of that which is evil, and an exhortation to emulate the best forms of character, and to avoid bad behavior. Each of these things has been placed in its appropriate location such nothing better or even equal to can be visualized by the intellect. In place are the parables of past centuries and of the examples that God made of those among them who were obstinate. It admonishes future generations with arguments and justifications, and with proofs for and against. All of this is meant to add emphasis to his call, and to apprize them of the significance of that which he commands, and that which he forbids.

Producing and compiling such disparate material in an organized and harmonious fashion is beyond the strength and ability of human beings. People have thus failed to meet this challenge by replicating it, or to confront it on the level of structure. Critics were therefore left claiming that it had to be poetry, because it was versified, or magic because it had the ability to incapacitate. It made a huge impression on them, smiting their consciences, frightening them and perplexing, so much so that they failed to control the urge to acknowledge, and to say: "It does indeed have a sweetness, and it does indeed have an elegance!" At one point, out of ignorance, they went so far as to say: "asāţīr 'l-awwalīn; iktatabahā fahiya tumlā `alaihi bukratan wa asīlan" [17](25:5) This they uttered knowing full well that its recipient was himself unlettered, with no one close by capable of dictating or writing down material of this nature, that provokes such animosity, ignorance, and incapacity."

He then said: "I have also spoken of an aspect of inimitability that people have overlooked, which is its effects on the heart and its impact on the conscience. Apart from the Qur'ān no other speech, in poetic or prose form, reaches the ears and sends to the heart, both sweetness and beauty on some occasions, and fear and awe on other occasions. God Almighty says: “lau anzalnā hādha ‘l-Qur’ān `alā jabal la ra’aitahū khāshi`an mutasaddi`an min khashyat Allāh” [18](59:21) and: “Allāh nazzala aĥsana ‘l-ĥadīth kitāban mutashābihan mathāniya taqsha`irru minhu julūd alladhīna yakhshauna rabbahum” [19](39:23)

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[17] "Ancient folklore! He writes them down, as they are dictated to him, morning and afternoon."

Ibn Surāqa has said: “Scholars differ as to the reasons why the Qur’ān is inimitable, and they have mentioned, in this regard, several such reasons, all of which are sound and correct. But together, these reasons still don’t add up to even one tenths of one thousandths of its inimitability. Whilst one group has ascribed this to its brevity and lucidity, another has done so to its elucidation and its eloquence, and another still, to its integrity and its arrangement. Some have said that it is because it is outside the scope of Arab discourse which comprises of verse, prose, oratory, and poetry. This, despite its usage of letters from their language, meanings common to their addresses, and words that belong to their mode of communications. It nonetheless, in essence, belongs to a genre of discourse different from theirs, and to an altogether unique category separate from theirs. So   much so that one who tries to preserve its meaning whilst changing its vocabulary will take away its radiance, and one who tries to preserve its vocabulary whilst changing its meaning will destroy its purpose. All of this then, is a manifest testimony to its inimitability.

One scholar has said: “It lies in the fact that no matter how often it is recited its reader never tires of it and its listener never wearies of it”. Another has said: “It lies in its narration of past events.” Another has said: “It lies in its contents pertaining to the unseen, and its definitive pronouncements on other matters.” One scholar has said: “It is because it encompasses the kinds of knowledge that require exhaustive commentaries, but which are still not entirely comprehended.”

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[18] “Had We revealed this Book on to a mountain then you would surely have seen it fearful, splitting apart in awe of God.”

[19] “It is God who frequently sends down the best of discourses as a divine writ, in repetitive pairs, and which causes the skin of those who hold Him in awe to shiver. . .”

‘L-Zarkashī had this to say in the work *'l-Burhān*: “Experts are of the opinion that it is inimitable for all the foregoing reasons, and not for any single one of them as such. It encompasses all of this, and there is therefore no point ascribing inimitability to just one category. In fact there are others that have not been mentioned. These include:

a-It fills the ears and the hearts of its listeners with awe, those who endorse it as well as those who deny it.

b-It is forever fresh and original to the ears of the listeners and the tongues of the reciters.

c-It combines opposing qualities such as purity with sweetness which are usually not combined in human discourse.

d- It was made the last of the scriptures , and thus independent of all other scriptures, whilst the previous scriptures are dependent on it for clarification. Thus, the Almighty says: “inna hādha ‘l-Qur’ān yaqussu `alā banī Isrā’īl akthara alladhī hum fīhi yakhtalifūn” [20](27: 76)

And ‘l-Rummānī says: “The inimitability of the Qur’ān is manifested by the fact that despite a huge number of claimants and a dire need to respond, the challenge was not taken up. It is also manifested in its ability to address all and sundry, its allure, its eloquence, its foretelling the future, its breaking of habits, and the fact that it has been compared to all other miracles.” He said: “This breaking of habits (*naqd 'l-`ādat*) refers to the fact that there was already in place an abiding tradition of language, including poetry, rhyme, oratory, letters, and the kind of prose that is common to human discourse. The Qur’ān then introduced a unique style, quite unlike that tradition, and with a level of beauty that surpassed all others patterns of speech, and with a diction that was the best.” He said: “As for its “comparison to other miracles”, the miracle here is in the fact that the parting of the sea, the transformation of the string to a snake, and other such miracles are but a single manifestation of inimitability. They contradict natural law and prevent humanity from taking up the challenge.

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[20] “This Qur’an does indeed, relate to the Children of Israel parables about which they mostly dispute.”

Qādī `lyād had this to say in the work *ʾl-Shifāʾ*: “Know that the Qur’ān comprises of multiple forms of inimitability, which may be summarized in the following four forms:

I. Its excellent composition, its appropriate word usage, its eloquence, its multiple forms of brevity, its extraordinary rhetoric, unheard of among the Arabs who themselves were doyens of the language, and masters of this science.

II. Its unusual arrangement, and peculiar style that was out of keeping with the literary style of the Arabs. Also unique was the poetic and prosaic structure with which it came, upon which are based its verse endings, and the rhymes of its vocabulary. Nothing comparable existed before and after it. He said: “Each one of its forms–brevity, rhetoric, and a peculiar style–are distinct categories of inimitability none of which the Arabs were able to match. These were beyond their capabilities, distinct from their type of eloquence and linguistic style. This is in contrast to those who hold that its inimitability lies in the totality of its rhetoric and its style.

III. The reports it contained, the fact pertaining to the unseen, and the prophecies that eventually came to be.

IV. The information it provides with regard to past events, previous communities, and bygone legal systems, of which nothing was known except for scattered reports from the People of the Book. Entire lifetimes were spent studying these reports, whereas the Prophet (s), who was unlettered and thus unable to read or write, was able to reproduce them, as is, and in accordance with the material evidence that existed.

He said: “These then are the clear, incontrovertible aspects of its inimitability. And the following are examples that fall outside this category.

1-Verses revealed to incapacitate a community with regard to some matter, and to inform them that they will never be able to perform. Consequently, they are in fact incapacitated, and unable to act in this regard. The Jews for instance, are told: “fa tamannau ‘l-maut in kuntum sādiqīn; wa lan yatamannauh abadan” [21](2:94-95)

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[21] Yearn for death, if you are indeed truthful. But they will never yearn for death.”

Consequently, no one among them ever yearned for death. This genre is incorporated into the third category.

2-The terror that fills the heart of its listeners, and the awe that seizes its readers. On listening to one such verse, a group did in fact, come to believe, just as did Jubair b. Muţ`im when he heard the Prophet (s) recite the chapter *‘l-Tūr*. He said: “When he reached the verse: “am khuliqū min ghair shay’in am hum ‘l-khāliqūn. . .’l-musaitirūn” [22](52:35-37) My spirits began to soar! He said: “This was the moment when Islam first took hold of my heart.” One group actually succumbed to death on hearing its verses. They were subjects for publication. Then he said: “Another element of its inimitability is that it is an eternal sign to be preserved by God Himself.

3-Its reciter is not made weary by it, and its listener is not dismissive of it. If anything, its pursuit intensifies its sweetness, whilst its repeated recitations increase devotion to it. Other literature, when repeated, tends to cause discomfort and boredom. Thus, the Prophet (s) described the Qur’ān as: “That which does not degenerate because of constant application.”

4-It encompasses, quite succinctly, and with an economy of words, the kind of knowledge and information not found in any other book, nor comprehended by any individual. He said: “This is included in the category on rhetoric, and should therefore, not be counted as a separate category of inimitability. The previous categories however, are singled out, not for their inimitability as such, but for their uniqueness and their special attributes. The essence of its inimitability is to be found in the previous four categories, which should therefore serve as the frame of reference.”

Note

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[22] “Were they created without a cause, or did they create themselves. . .in charge.”

1. Opinions differ as to the extent to which inimitability exists in the Qur’ān: whilst some Mu`tazilites hold that it suffuses the entire Qur’ān, the two foregoing verses disproves their claims. The Judge (Abū `Iyādh) has said: “Inimitability is always linked to chapters, both the short ones as well as the long ones.” In this regard he depends on the words of the verse: “bi sūrat”[23] On another occasion he has said: “It is attached to a chapter or the equivalent of a chapter, such that variations of its rhetorical power are manifest. He said: “If it is a single verse then its words would be equivalent to a chapter, at least equal to the length of *‘l-Kauthar*. Only then is it inimitable.” He said: “No evidence exists of their failure to produce less than this length.” One group maintains that multiple verses are required to pose a challenge, and that a single verse will not suffice. Another group is of the opinion that the following verse supports the view that inimitability applies to both small and large parts of the Qur’ān: “fa lya’tū bi ĥadīth mithlihī; in kānū sādiqīn” [24](52:34). The Judge responded: “The verse proffers no such proof, because the sense of a complete discourse cannot be communicated in less than a single short chapter.”
2. Opinions differ as to the whether the inimitability of the Qur’ān is self evident. The Judge said: “Abū ‘l-Hasan ‘l-`Ash`arī maintains that knowledge of its appearance to the Prophet (s) is considered self evident, whereas the actual inimitability is inferred. I am of the opinion that a non Arab, as well as one not familiar with rhetorical language, is not likely to know its inimitability except through inference. As for one familiar with rhetoric, with the multifarious linguistic traditions of the Arabs and with peculiar constructions, both his own incapability as well as that of those around him would be self evident to him.”
3. Whilst agreeing that the Qur’ān expresses the highest forms of rhetoric they differ as to whether it is uniformly eloquent. Thus, would there exist verbal structures

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[23] “. . .by way of a single chapter.”

[24] “Let the produce then, a single discourse like unto it, if it be that they are truthful.”

more suitable and symmetrical for the transmission of some given meaning? The Judge disagrees, and maintains that each of its words represents the apex of meaning, even though some may be more perceptive of this than others. Abū Nasr ‘l-Qushairī prefers the view that it does indeed vary. He thus says: “We make no claims that everything in the Qur’ān is of the purest eloquence. Others have also said the Qur’ān comprises of material that is both eloquent as well as most eloquent. The scholar `Izz ‘l-Dīn b. `Abd ‘l-Salām has inclined to his view, and posed this question: “Why is the Qur’ān not most eloquent in its entirety? The master, Mauhūb ‘l-Jazarī furnished a reply which in essence states that the Qur’ān, structured in this way, would have contradicted the conventional speech patterns of the Arabs which combines both eloquent and most eloquent discourse. The challenge as such would have remained incomplete. Thus, it followed their speech patterns so that their inability to meet its challenge could be manifest. And this then precluded them from countering: “You produce that over which we essentially lack ability! This is tantamount to a seeing person saying to the blind: I have overcome you by way of my sight. The blind one will simply respond: “Your victory would be complete only if I too was able to see, and your sight was stronger than mine! But seeing that I am totally deprived of sight, how is it possible to take up the challenge!

4. It is said that absolving the Qur’ān of metered poetry, despite its superiority over unmetered poetry lies in the fact that the Qur’ān is the fountainhead of verity, and the epicenter of truthfulness. The poet in contrast, exerts all effort construing falsehood as truth, hyperbole as praise, exaggerated rebuke and offense, without revealing the truth and affirming sincerity. God therefore, has absolved His Apostle of this. And because poetry is notoriously false the author of the work *‘l-Burhān* has designated analogies that frequently lead to falsehood and fabrications as poetry. One sage has thus said: “No pious, truthful person has been known to have been adept in poetry. As for the metered verses of the Qur’ān, the explanation for them is that such material is not called poetry. This is because intent is a requirement for composing poetry. If such material is

considered poetry then all such speech as happens to be metered should also be regarded as poetry, in which case all people would be poets. Hardly any speech is without such material, which in their case, appeared on the tongues of the articulate as well. And given their obsession with criticizing the Qur'ān, if such material was considered poetry, they would surely have hastened to oppose and criticize it. In reality, such material emerges when language reaches the pinnacle of harmony. It has also been said that a single verse, or something similar in meter, is not considered poetry, for the latter requires at least two verses or more. Another view is that material composed in the *rajaz* form is in the first place, not called poetry. Another view is that to be considered poetry the *rajaz* form requires at least four stanzas, and this in no way appears in the Qur'ān.

5. One scholar has said: "The challenge was put to human beings and not to the *jinns*, because the latter were not members of the Arabic speaking community whose form the Qur'ān emulated. As for the verse of the Qur'ān: "qul la 'in ijtama`at 'l-ins wa 'l-jinn" [25](17:88) it is couched in such terms to exalt its inimitability, because language encompassing groups is imbued with a potency not found in language restricted to individuals. If both species are considered part of this challenge, and if their failure is to be expected notwithstanding their collaboration, then the failure of a single group is all the more likely. Another scholar has said: "It was put to the *jinns*, and the angels are intended as well, because they too are incapable of producing the likes of the Qur'ān. In his work *Gharā'ib 'l-Tafsīr* 'l-Kirmānī has said: "Only human beings and the *jinn* are mentioned in the verse because the Prophet (s) had been dispatched to these two groups and not to the angels.

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[25] "Say: If all human beings and all jinns. . ."

6. Ghazzālī was asked about the verse: “wa lau kāna min `ind ghair Allāh la wajadū fīhi ikhtilāfan kathīran” [26](4:82) He replied: “Inconsistency (*’l-ikhtilāf*) is a word encompassing several meanings. In this case differences in people’s opinions is not what is being denied, but rather, differences inherent in the Qur’ān itself. When some statement is said to be contradictory, then the reference may be to the fact that it is not uniformly eloquent, or that it makes contradictory claims. Thus some of its sections may stress elements of the sacred whilst some others may stress elements of the secular. Or it may comprise of conflicting styles: sections thereof may be poetic, or lackluster, or pursuing a particular purity of style, or something totally different. God’s speech is absolved of such contradictions because it follows a single format in its arrangement, one that is uniform from start to finish, and uniformly eloquent. It does not comprise of language that is good, as well as bad, and in addition, it tracks of inviting creatures to turn to God Almighty, and to turn attention away from the secular and towards the sacred. Human discourse is indeed open to such conflicts. Thus if the language of the poets and prose writers is evaluated it will show contradictions in arrangement, in degrees of eloquence, if not in the art of eloquence itself. It will thus comprise of language that is both good and bad, and no two letters or poems will be equal. A single poem will comprise of stanzas that are both eloquent as well as fatuous. The *qasīda* genre, and poetry will also reflect the same inconsistencies, all because poets and the literati have a tendency to roam confusedly through all kinds of valleys. On occasion they laud this world, whilst on others, they remain scornful of it. On occasion they laud cowardice as exemplifying discretion, and on others they revile it as weakness. On occasion they praise courage and call it rigor, and on others, they revile it and call it rashness. Human language is never free of such contradictions because it is driven by competing objectives and purposes. And the human condition itself

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[26] “If it had come from anyone other than God then they would have found many inconsistencies therein.”

varies: eloquence complements its moments of joy and happiness, and encumbers its moments of strife. And so too do his objectives change: at times he is inclined to one thing, and at others, to some other thing. This therefore causes changes in his language. That some human being therefore, could speak for twenty three years, the period in which the Qur’ān was revealed, with such consistency, is no fluke. The Prophet (s) was a human being himself who lived through changing circumstances, and if this had been his speech, or that of any other human being, then one would certainly have found therein many variations.”

7. The Judge has said: “To the question: “Do you also maintain that the other words of God, like the Torah and the Gospels, are also inimitable? we say: There is nothing inimitable therein with regard to arrangement and structure, although, they too, like the Qur’ān, are inimitable in terms of their contents that deal with the Unseen and with past events. It is not considered inimitable because God did not describe them as He had did the Qur’ān, and because we know that it was not presented in the way of a challenge, as is the case with the Qur’ān. Furthermore, these languages are devoid of those elements of eloquence that lend themselves to a challenge. In the work *‘l-Khāţiriyāt* Ibn Jinnī said that in the verse: “qālū yā Mūsā! immā an tulqiya wa immā an nakūna naĥnu ‘l-mulqīn” [27](20:65) the words *wa immā an nulqiya* were not used for two reasons. The first pertains to word usage, and more particularly, to its coupling with the opening words of the verse. The second pertains to meaning, and to the fact that the Almighty wanted to convey the passion of the magicians and the arrogance they showed towards Moses. He thus ascribes to them words that fully and comprehensively ascribes these acts to them. He then poses this question: “We know that the magicians did not speak the (Arabic) language. Should we then, hold them to the same linguistic standards!” He replies: “All narratives in the Qur’ān pertaining to past people who were not native speakers have been

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[27] “They said: ‘O Moses! Either you throw first, or we will be the first to throw.”

Arabized; the words used are not literally theirs. No doubt, `the eloquence found in the verse: “qālū in hādhāni la sāĥirāni yurīdāni an yukhrijākum min ardikum bi siĥrihimā wa yadhhabā bi ţarīqatikum ‘l-muthlā” [28](20:63) did not exist in the language of the non Arabs.

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[28] “They said: “These two are but magicians bent on evicting you from your lands by way of their magic, and destroying your well trodden path!

8. At the beginning of his work *Anwār ‘l-Taĥsīl fī Asrār ‘l-Tanzīl* ‘l-Bārizī said: “Know that a single idea may be conveyed using words of varying eloquence. In the same way, two parts of any one statement may be dissimilar in that the one part may express a level of lucidity not warranted by the other part. In all such cases having a sense of the multiple meanings of such statements or of the most appropriate vocabulary is essential, together with a sense of their applicability in any given context. In the case of human beings this, for the most part, is difficult to achieve, but in the case of God, it is immediately forthcoming. This is what makes the Qurān the best and the most eloquent of speeches, even though it too comprises of material of varying quality, both the good and the excellent, the emphatic and the profound. There are examples of this, such as the verse: “wa jana ‘l-jannatain dān” [29](55:54) In this case if the words *wa thamar ‘l-jannatain qarīb* were used instead, it would not have sufficed because of the assonance between the words *‘l-jana* and *‘l-jannatain*. Also, the word *thamar* does not allude to the fact that the fruit had ripened. Finally, the endings would not then have been dissimilar. Another example is the verse: “wa mā kunta tatlū min qablihī min kitāb” [30](29:48) where *tatlū* is more appropriate than *taqra`u* because the *hamza* in the latter impedes pronunciation. Another example is the verse: “lā raiba fīhi” (2:2) where *raiba* is more appropriate than *lā shakka fīhi* because the contraction of the *kāf* impedes pronunciation. This is also why *raiba* is used more often. Another example is the verse: “wa lā tahinū” [31](3:139) where *tahinū* is preferred for it is more easily pronounced than *tad`ufū* In the case of the verse: wahana ‘l-`azm minnī” (19:4) the word *wahana* more appropriate than *da`ufa* because pronouncing the *ā* consonant is easier than the *ū*. Another example is the verse:

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[29] “The fruit of both these gardens will be close at hand.”

[30] “You were never able to recite scripture previously. . .”

[31] Be not fainthearted”

“āmana” [32](2:62) which is more easily pronounced than *saddaqa*. This is also why the former appears more frequently than the latter. Other examples are: “ātharaka Allāh” [33](12:91) where *ātharaka* is more easily pronounced than *faddalaka*; the verse: “wa ātā” [34](2:177) where *ātā* is more easily pronounced than *a`ţā*; the verse: “andhara”[35](46:21) where *andhara* is more easily pronounced than *khawwafa*; the verse: “khair lakuma” [36](2:184) where the latter is more easily pronounced than *afdala lakum*; the verse: “hādhā khalq Allāh” [37](31:11) and the verse: “yu’minūn bi ‘l-ghaib” [38](2:3) where the infinitives *khalq*and *ghaib* are more easily pronounced than *makhlūq* and *ghā’ib* respectively; the verse: “tankiĥu” [39](2:230) where *tankiĥu* is more easily pronounced than *tatazawwaju*, and this is because words on the scale *taf`ilu* are more easily pronounced than those on the scale *tatafa`allu*. This is also why the word *nikāĥ* is more commonly used.” In the interests of brevity and ease in pronunciation words such as: *‘l-raĥmat, ‘l-ghadab, ‘l-ridā, ‘l-ĥubb,* and *‘l-maqt,* are attributed to God even though such attributes do not apply to Him in reality. If the appropriate attributes were used instead then the verses would have become lengthy. A statement could, for example, then appear as: *yu`āmiluhū mu`āmalat ‘l-muĥibb wa ‘l-māqit*.[40] Figurative speech, because of its brevity and ease in pronunciation, is preferred to the literal in such cases. Furthermore, such speech is based on the highest form of rhetoric, as in the case of the verse: “fa lammā āsafūnā intaqamnā minhum” [41](43:55) This is preferable to statements such as: *fa lammā `āmilūnā mu`āmalat ‘l-maghdab* or *fa lammā ‘atau ilainā bimā ya’tīhi ‘l-maghdab.*

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[32] He believed”

[33] “God has preferred you”

[34] ‘And he gives. . .”

[35] “He warns. . .”

[36] “Is better for you”

[37] ‘This is the creation of God.”

[38] “They believe in the Unsesn.”

[39] “marry. . .”

[40] “He treats him like a lover or a hater.”

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[41] “SO when they angered Us We took revenge. . .”

9. ‘L-Rummānī has said: “That the short chapters may well have contradictions, is said to be inconceivable, because the challenge applied to them as well. The following verse: “Fa’tū bi sūrat” [42](10:38) shows their incapacity, and it makes no distinction between short and long chapters. It may also be said that the interstices of the short chapters may be altered, such that one word may be substituted for another. Would that therefore, be considered a contradiction? No, because one who is not a poet, and who has no faculty to distinguish between that which is rhythmically balanced and that which is not, may nonetheless, still be able to compose lines of poetry. If such a person who is not a poet opts to amend the following lines: *wa qātim ‘l-a`māq khāwī ‘l-mukhtariq; mushtabih ‘l-a`lām lammā` ‘l-khafaq; bi kull wafd ‘l-rīĥ min ĥaith inkharaq*, by substituting ‘l-mumazziq for ‘l-mukhtariq, ‘l-shafaq for ‘l-khafaq, inţalaq for inkharaq, he may well do so. But that would not render him a poet, because even a novice knows that no such substitution is conceivable in these lines. The same is true for one who changes the interstices.

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[42] “Produce then, a single chapter.”